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Marxism Today

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

NORA JEFFERY — THE TWENTY-SECOND CONGRESS OF THE C.P.S.U.

J. R. CAMPBELL — THE AIM OF THE GOVERNMENT'S WAGES POLICY

JACK HENDY — ALL WRONG ABOUT THE UNIONS

CADMUS — A NOTE ON TRADE UNIONS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

JOHN LEWIS — WHAT IS SCIENTIFIC THINKING?

DISCUSSION:

SID DOUGLAS
D. A. GRIFFITHS — ON STAGES OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Marxism Today

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Editorial Comments

UNDER the questioning heading "U.S. Industrial Output Up?" the New York correspondent of *The Times* (6.11.61) surveys the industrial outlook there. Although he states that the trend in the economy as a whole is still strongly upwards, the evidence he produces is not very convincing. Retail sales advanced in October, "but their pace has continued to be disappointing". He solemnly records that steel production rose slightly—"by seven-tenths of one per cent"! Exports show a downward trend.

Unemployment (that is, registered unemployment, which is not the same thing, particularly in the United States) declined in October to just under 4 million. But Department of Labor officials expected the number of unemployed to rise to 4,500,000 in December and 5,500,000 in January. The U.S. Secretary of Labor is "disturbed" at the continuing high figures throughout the year, and says "it underscores that we have a stubborn and continuing unemployment problem". In spite of repeated doses of additional arms orders.

Two Fine Novels

It is a long while since two such fine and progressive novels appeared within a few weeks of each other as James Aldridge's *The Last Exile* and Alan Sillitoe's *Key to the Door*. They are very different books, in subject-matter and in style. Aldridge writes of Egypt, of the attack on Suez and the crisis, moral and political, which this involves for individuals and for nations. *The Last Exile* is a panoramic work, vast and inclusive in its structure, nobly and austerely planned. Sillitoe returns to the Seaton family in Nottingham, and though the climax of his novel takes place in Malaya, it is the childhood and youth of one English working-class lad that is his subject. *Key to the Door* is about the developing consciousness of Brian Seaton, the apparently disparate yet connected forces which move him towards communism.

But these two different and highly individual novels have at least three things in common. They are both long books. It is as though these novelists, like the progressive Italian film-directors, are asserting their need to spread themselves, to see all round a subject, rather than to produce a work of obsessive intensity reflecting a merely subjective emotion. Secondly, both novelists are keenly, profoundly aware of the significance of imperialism—not just as an external phenomenon but as it affects Britain and British people. Aldridge's Captain Scott and Sillitoe's Brian Seaton are both seen as, in their different ways, products of imperialism; and it is with the growth of their understanding of what imperialism really means, that their personal dilemmas are clarified. Thirdly, James Aldridge and Alan Sillitoe both write as men deeply imbued with the values of progressive humanity. Their personalities as writers are entirely different, but their underlying artistic point of view is similar. Because they recognise, in their analyses and on their pulses, the way the world is going, they are able to look into the human situations of our day with an insight denied to most contemporary novelists, however pretentious.

Out-of-date Outlook

At a time when the socialist countries and the peoples of Asia and Africa are more and more influencing the course of history, it is pleasant to find an official report taking cognisance of this fact and facing some of the implications for British education. ". . . the British educational system has taken little account of these developments. So far as it considers any area outside the United Kingdom, it still seems able only to see western Europe, with an occasional bow to North America and the Commonwealth . . . this state of affairs is anachronistic, and shows an inadequate response to the changes now occurring in the world . . . it is the universities which have the strongest obligation to correct it."

The report, published in October, is that of a Sub-Committee set up by the University Grants Committee under the chairmanship of Sir William Hayter, former British Ambassador to the U.S.S.R., to review progress made in the universities since 1947 towards a more adequate provision for Slavonic, Asian and African studies. It finds that progress has been unsatisfactory, and proposes measures to improve the situation during the next ten years. The complete inadequacy of these proposals contrasts strikingly with the magnitude and urgency of the need. Chief amongst them is a proposal for the creation over the next ten years of 125 new university posts in such subjects as history, geography, economics, law and anthropology, with special five-year grants to

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enable the new appointees "to specialise . . . on one of the areas in which the Sub-Committee is interested, to learn the language, and to visit the area." The creation of 100 post-graduate awards on similar lines is also proposed. The Sub-Committee estimates the cost of its main proposals as rising to £300,000 a year by 1967, and proceeds to make the remarkable claim that their implementations would ". . . provide the nation with the fundamental knowledge about these countries without which Great Britain cannot play an effective part in world affairs". This is so very large a claim for so very limited an effort that it is hard to believe that the Sub-Committee itself takes it seriously.

The report betrays clear signs of orthodox ruling-class thought. It hopes that we can muddle through on the cheap to some sort of solution, and its main preoccupation is with those fields of study which can be most helpful to Britain's rulers in their long rear-guard action against the advancing forces of national independence in Asia and Africa. Whereas what Britain needs is an approach to these countries on a basis of full freedom and equality, and the encouragement of studies which will bring a deeper understanding of their cultures and aspirations, and in consequence necessarily help to dispel imperialist attitudes still widely prevalent in Britain.

All the same, the Sub-Committee's proposals, whatever their inadequacy, and whatever the underlying motives that inspire them, are to be welcomed. Their adoption would indeed serve the national interest, and in ways not perhaps envisaged by their authors. For new recruits to these fields of studies will necessarily be drawn from those interested enough to take advantage of the new facilities offered, and that interest will often stem from a genuine respect for the achievements of the peoples in question. And the results of research and teaching inspired by this outlook can only be to strengthen the bonds of friendship between these peoples and our own.

Going Down

Soviet scientists are busy with plans not only for flying into space but for descending into the depths of the earth.

At a recent meeting organised by the Ministry of Geology, Soviet geophysicists, geologists and mining experts discussed plans for drilling five deep holes into the earth ranging from six to over nine miles. The five sites are chosen so as to reveal a cross-section of all types of rock that make up the earth's crust.

One of the five sites is in the volcanic areas of the Kuriles, where the earth's crust is very thin, and where, consequently, it is planned to reach the Mohorovic layer, and obtain samples of the unknown matter beneath the mantle of the earth.

At the meeting even more ambitious projects came under discussion, including the sinking of holes to the depths of twelve and a half miles. All sorts of practical and theoretical problems came under discussion—new approaches to the origin of continents and oceans, mountains and earthquakes; new sources of thermal energy to be tapped by deep drilling.

The President of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Mstislav Keldysh, declared that it would be necessary to lower into the depths of the earth complex scientific stations similar to those installed in spaceships and sputniks.

The "Break-through"

In trying to keep its finger on the pulse of the way people are thinking, the advertising community likes to come up with a word that is in some way attuned to the mood of the people. For a while the magic word was "togetherness", but now it is "break-through". In the field of the cinema and theatre this latter word has been used for some time to describe the kind of picture that put the mirror up to real life and got away from the drawing room and the escapist dream world. That a number of "break-through" films like *A Taste of Honey* were empty and had nothing to say, and that others like *The Angry Silence* preached a reactionary sermon did not seem to matter to a number of critics, directors and producers, who welcomed the change of atmosphere. The grip of the conforming old guard is so strong, so corrupting and so far-reaching that any change was a chance.

It is not surprising that a number of those associated with this break-through have also found themselves at one with attempts in other directions to get a truer and a wider appreciation of culture. On another page we print a note by "Cadmus" on cultural activities and the trade unions, which touches on developments in that field.

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The Twenty-Second Congress of the C.P.S.U.

Nora Jeffrey

THE Twenty-Second Congress met in the new Congress Hall, built inside the Kremlin walls. It is a magnificent building of glass and stone, of modern design, fitted throughout with beautiful modern furniture. Its hall is spacious and light, fully air-conditioned, and seats about 6,000 people. Here were gathered 4,183 delegates from the Soviet Union and representatives of eighty-seven fraternal Communist Parties. Delegations had been elected from Regional and District Congresses all over the Soviet Union, on the basis of one delegate for every 2,000 members. (For the Twentieth Congress it had been one delegate for every 5,000 members.) Seventy-two per cent of them had secondary or higher education; 22 per cent of them were under thirty-five years of age and 37 per cent between forty and fifty years; and 1,073 of them were women.

The Congress met in session from ten a.m. till seven p.m. or later, with one half-hour and one two-hour break. It began on October 17th and ended on October 31st.

Two main reports were presented, both by Khrushchov, on the first two days of the Congress. One was the report of the Central Committee on the work of the three years since the Twenty-First Congress; and the other the report on the twenty-year programme. They are an inseparable whole. The programme puts before the Soviet people, and in fact the people of the whole world, a project for the advancement of society unequalled in the history of civilisation; but this is only possible on the basis of the tremendous developments that have already taken place in the last six years, since the Twentieth Congress.

The Soviet Union is now in the midst of its seven-year plan, itself a part of the twenty-year programme; and it is already clear that socialism is able to develop colossal productive forces and create a real abundance of material and cultural wealth. All branches of the economy are developing fast, and it is now certain that many planned targets will be exceeded. In six years the output of steel has increased by 26 million tons, more than Britain's annual output; the extraction of oil by 95 million tons, as much as if five new Baku oilfields had been opened; and electric power by 157,000 million kw., the equivalent of fifty new giant power stations. At the same time output of consumer goods is growing much faster than in the past; and the government is at present allocating an additional 2,500 million roubles above the plan for textiles and footwear.

Industries for producing high-precision instruments, the means for automation, special metals, atomic and electronic equipment have been established, producing thousands of new types of machines.

Important qualitative changes have taken place in building and transport. The electric power industry is being provided with a new technical basis. Output of plastics and artificial fibres has more than doubled in six years. The prefabricated concrete elements industry has been built almost anew, and now not only houses are being built of prefabricated units, but factories as well.

In this period, between 1956-61, state investments in the economy amounted to more than the total investments in the entire Soviet period up to then.

Living Standards

All this is already having a marked effect on living standards. Real wages have gone up in the last five years by 27 per cent and will go up by 40 per cent by 1965. In that year, too, all taxation will be abolished. On average, old age pensions have been doubled.

The development of housing is on a staggering scale. Fifty million people, almost a quarter of the entire population, have moved into new homes in the last five years. To me the outskirts of Moscow were hardly recognisable since I was last there in the summer of 1958. And one can gain some idea of the speed of development by the present that was made to the Congress from the building workers on one construction site—they completed a block of sixty flats in twenty-five days.

The working day has been shortened. In 1960 all factory, office and professional workers went over to the seven- or six-hour working days.

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Considerable effort is going into the development of communal services, modern, well-equipped shops, canteens, dining rooms and big food factories.

There is really no need to say that this whole report breathed tremendous confidence, and set the stage for the introduction of the new programme—the programme, as it was put, "for the building of the first communist society in the history of mankind".

This is a concrete, scientifically based plan, which defines the practical tasks in industry, agriculture, the development of the state, science, culture and communist education. It is its practical and comprehensive nature, together with its elaboration of the theoretical problems involved in achieving the plan, that make it a truly remarkable document. It is, moreover, a programme of the whole people. More than half a million meetings were held to discuss it at factories, farms, offices, barracks, and 73 million people attended. Letters with amendments poured into the government and Party, and 300,000 to the newspapers. Here was democracy really at work.

The theme of the programme is "everything for the sake of man, for the benefit of man". It is filled throughout with the ideas of peace and brotherhood among nations.[1]

To achieve this the Soviet Union has to take first place in the world in production per head of the population, provide the whole people with the highest living standard in the world, and gradually convert socialist relations of production into communist relations. And when Khrushchov asked the question: "Do we have all we need to build up the material and technical basis of communism in two decades?" he answered "Yes, comrades. We do."

The Congress, both in the report and the discussion that followed, decided in broad outline and in detail the achievement of this breath-taking project.

Labour Productivity

Industrial output is to rise six-fold. And within this the gap between the rate of growth of the production of means of production and of consumer goods is to be greatly narrowed. In twenty years time the Soviet Union will produce nearly twice as much as is now produced in the whole non-socialist world.

This truly gigantic development is only possible with a great increase in labour productivity. Indeed the aim is to achieve the highest labour productivity in the world. And for British workers, where increased productivity is associated with speed-up and increased exploitation, this is of great interest. Time and time again in the report, and in delegates' speeches, the conception was hammered home, that increased labour productivity is not going to mean harder work, more dogged slogging. It will be brought about by equipping the Soviet people with the most advanced technology in the world, so that work becomes a source of inspiration.

Khrushchov posed the question: "What new implements of labour will form the bone and sinew of communist production?" and his reply was "They consist of a system of machines for comprehensive mechanisation and automation." They are planning for mass production of these machines, and as they help to raise labour productivity, the working day will be shortened.

This is the reason why they so confidently speak of ending the difference between manual and mental labour, of doing away with the category of low-paid workers. They are going to provide the material conditions for the whole people to be skilled, and to use their skill for society.

In the course of the present seven-year plan a great wave of socialist emulation is sweeping through the country. Factory departments, and whole factories are working for the title of Enterprise of Communist Construction. This effort is based on using to the full all the technical and scientific help that can be given from on top, combined with the utmost encouragement of innovations by the workers themselves. At the Moscow textile factory that I visited the women told me they had already put into operation 300 such innovations from the factory workers. This was the first factory in Moscow to win the coveted title.

Another sidelight on this whole process of scientific development was given by a leading scientist, Semyonov, Chairman of the Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge. He foresaw the development of scientific research among the people on a mass scale. He said: "As we advance to communism, as the working day is reduced, more and more people will devote themselves to scientific and technological work in their spare time."

Every key branch of industry is covered in the plan. The aim is to complete the electrification of the whole country. They will build 2,800 new engineering and metal-working plants and reconstruct 1,900 old ones. The chemical industry is to increase seventeen-fold, iron and steel output to go up to 250 million tons of steel a year, fuel to

[1] See *Marxism Today*, September 1961, p. 265, for the definition of communism given in the Programme.

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increase four-fold. Great new metallurgical and power centres are to be built, and large masses of water from the northern region of the European part of the country brought south for new irrigation schemes.

Plans for Agriculture

As for industry, so for agriculture, bold plans were agreed on. There is no doubt that agriculture remains the greatest problem of the economy. The task put and accepted is to increase output three-and-a-half-fold in the two decades, in order to achieve an abundance of high-quality food products and raw materials.

This will mean a very big increase in labour productivity, and is to be brought about by the widest introduction of complex mechanisation. The point was made that on the best farms today labour productivity is five to six times higher than the average. In the course of this process they will bring about the gradual elimination of the differences between the town and countryside; and at the end of the twenty years they aim to have turned agricultural work into a branch of industrial labour.

Together with mechanisation will go the development of a new crop structure, which will reduce the amount of fallow land, and encourage the growing of the most productive crops.

We were interested to hear discussion on the proper utilisation of the new lands; for it seems that in some regions one-crop farming has become the custom, so that some fields have become choked with weed. A drive is going on to end this.

A great deal of the discussion on the report dealt with highly technical agricultural questions, with plenty of sharp criticisms from platform and floor, and at one point a lively exchange of corn-cobs between Khrushchov and a tractor brigade leader.

What trend of development do they see in the countryside? There will be far-reaching changes in the nature of labour, and communist construction will proceed through the development of both state farms and collective farms. As agriculture reaches a high level of technical development, it will make it possible to go over to communist forms of production and distribution.

So the material basis will be laid for a phenomenal rise in living standards. The tasks are to provide all the people, in the next ten years, with good, high quality food, and a sufficiency of all consumer goods; and the next ten years to meet consumer demand in full.

State and co-operative retail trade is to increase five-fold in the twenty years. Public catering is to be developed to the utmost, with a three-fold increase in the next ten years, and a thirteen-fold increase in twenty years. It will gradually take the place of home-cooking for all who want it. They are determined, too, to meet the public demand for laundries, repair shops for clothes, domestic appliances, and all such types of services, so that all who wish may use them instead of doing household work.

As far as housing is concerned, the plan is to end the shortage in ten years, and in twenty to guarantee every family a comfortable, separate home.

The working week will go over to thirty-five hours and thirty for some sections of workers, with three, then four weeks' holiday with pay.

Communist Relations

One of the interesting theoretical problems discussed was the development of socialist relations into communist relations. This had evidently figured in the pre-Congress discussion. Khrushchov put the point, "Why were they not introducing straight away the communist principle of 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs'? Why does the Party need two decades," he asked, "to build, in the main, a communist society? Because we must proceed from objective conditions." Two things are necessary. The material basis for going over fully to communist principles must be laid, that is an abundance of goods must be produced. For this the people still need material incentives (payment for work done). But a no-less-important condition is the understanding that labour is a prime necessity for all. This presupposes a very high level of understanding: though Khrushchov commented on the fact that the habit of working conscientiously to the best of their ability is growing among increasing numbers of people, so that work is no longer only a means of earning a living, but also a social responsibility.

Therefore the Party is proposing that in the next twenty years payment according to work done will remain the chief source of satisfying the needs of the people.

But at the same time it will combine with payment by wages a very large growth of funds for social services; and the combination of these two factors is seen as an essential part in the transformation of socialist relations into communist relations.

Real wages are going to double in the next ten years, and go up by 250 per cent in twenty years.

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But the increase in social funds is staggering. This is deliberate because the growth of these funds leads directly to communist distribution. The plan is to increase the annual funds of social consumption ten-fold by 1980.

Gradually they will move over in this period to the maintenance of children and all incapacitated people by the state, free education and medical care, rent-free housing, free communal services and transport. Pensions will rise, and enough homes for all old people who want them will be built. In the second decade they will introduce free meals at all factories, offices and farms.

New Stage of the State

For all these plans to come to fruition the utmost initiative will be needed at all levels, the most careful management of all aspects of public work and life, and the sharpest control on those in positions of authority. The programme provides the framework for this. It poses and resolves the question of the development of the dictatorship of the working class into a state of the whole people. This is a new stage in the growth of the socialist state, a very important stage on the way to communist public self-government.

The working-class dictatorship was needed to end all exploitation and build up the socialist state. But now that socialism has completely triumphed in the Soviet Union and they are entering the era of full-scale communist construction, the need for the dictatorship of the working class has ended, and the state gradually develops, under the leadership of the working class, "into a nation-wide organisation of all the working people of socialist society". The dictatorship becomes transformed into a state of the whole people.

Khrushchov pointed out that there is no sharp dividing line between these two stages; for the dictatorship of the working class from its beginning contains within it features of universal socialist democracy. As socialism develops these features grow stronger, until they finally become supreme. The state develops from an organ of class power into an instrument for expressing the will of the people.

Nevertheless, Khrushchov made the point that the state will be retained, because the tasks which need state help for their achievement have not yet been accomplished. And, in fact, it will remain long after the victory of the first phase of communism. The process of the withering away of the state will be a long one, covering the period until the whole of society is ready for self-government. It will remain until there is a developed communist society in the U.S.S.R. and socialism is consolidated in the world.

So the government and the Party are setting out to do everything possible to develop the democratic functions of the state, and to draw all citizens without exception into the management of the affairs of society.

The power of the Soviets will increase, and will more and more do the work of managing economic and social processes, taking over many of the matters now handled by the government. There are at present two million people on the Soviets and two million more working on committees of the Soviets. The apparatus of all the organs of administration is to be made simpler and cheaper, more efficient, with a big drive to root out all bureaucracy. All the social organisations, the trade unions, the Komsomol, the co-ops and cultural societies are to be developed.

The aim is to involve the greatest possible number of people in four ways: by continually improving the forms of popular representation; by extending the practice of nationwide discussion of major questions and of draft laws; by extending in every way the forms of public control over the government and other bodies, and making this more effective; and by systematically renewing the membership of the government organs and gradually spreading this principle to all organisations. In this way they will continually draw in millions of new people to learn how to administer the affairs of the country.

Education and the Individual

Both in the main report and in many speeches much time was devoted to the discussion of communist education and the all-round development of the individual. They regard the education of the people in the communist spirit as an extremely important element in the building of communism. They want a people deeply imbued with communist ideals, a high sense of civic duty, socialist international understanding and patriotism. The core of their education is the promotion of the right attitude to labour as a creative and social undertaking. They intend to provide for the full cultural development of everyone. They attach special importance to the upbringing of the young people.

> "Communist education has the all-important purpose of instilling in each man an awareness that man cannot live without work, that he cannot live without creating the necessities of life. All the good that Soviet man does is done for himself and for society as a whole. Doing your work conscientiously, doing all things well and in time means showing real concern for your comrades, who also work for everybody, yourself included. This is an expression of comradely

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co-operation and mutual assistance among people of the new society" (Report on the Programme).

This programme gives the answer to all the reactionaries who for years have ranted about the Communists' lack of moral principles. Throughout its pages run two conceptions: "One for all and all for one"; and "man is to man a friend, comrade and brother".

They are planning for a vast expansion of education, in which they see the most important task to be the raising of the cultural and technical level of all the workers and peasants to the level of the intelligentsia, so as to eliminate, in the main, the essential distinctions between mental and manual labour. In the coming twenty years the great majority of the people will receive a full secondary, specialised secondary or higher education. All forms of higher education will be made still more accessible to everybody.

There will be large developments of all forms of cultural activities and the greatest encouragement to writers, painters, poets.

In discussing this aspect of the programme Khrushchov made the point that it was quite wrong to think that during the transition to communism the family will become of less importance. The expansion of social services being planned would help the growth of rich family life, relieved of many of the burdens of today.

They have declared war on idlers, hooligans, swindlers, drunkards, and those who have a bad attitude to women. As Khrushchov put it, they want no moral cripples in society.

"The criterion of real freedom and happiness," he said, in his report on the work of the Central Committee, "is a social system which frees man from the yoke of exploitation, gives him broad democratic liberties and the opportunity to live in fitting conditions, a system that inspires him with confidence in the morrow, unfetters his individual abilities and talents and makes him feel that his labour is for the good of society."

The Cult of the Individual

It is in the setting of this programme of social advance unparalleled in man's history and the present strides being made, that we must place the discussion at the Congress of the cult of the individual and its consequences in Soviet life, and the activities of the anti-Party group.

The question was dealt with by Khrushchov in his first report, and referred to in some way by almost every Soviet speaker. Clearly it was a matter on which the whole Congress felt very deeply.

The delegates were told by Khrushchov that a very thorough and painstaking investigation is being made of the whole period involved under Stalin; and that as new facts are brought to light and verified they will be made known to the whole people, no matter how painful this may be, and written into the Party history. Many details of what has already been uncovered were given to the delegates and have since appeared in print. No one sitting in that hall could help being aware of how deeply moved every delegate was by this whole question.

It is important to recall here the conditions which made possible the arbitrary use of power under Stalin's leadership, and the abuses and crimes which resulted. An estimation of this was made in the resolution of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. in June 1956.

This was the difficult period of capitalist encirclement for the Soviet Union, when it was like a "besieged fortress". The capitalist powers sent large numbers of spies and wreckers into the country to try by every means to defeat the first socialist state. In this period, too, fascism came to power with the proclaimed aim of destroying communism. In such conditions the Soviet government had to call for the utmost vigilance by all the people against enemies within and without.

Add to this the incredible difficulties the Soviet people had to face in building socialism alone in a backward country, and doing it in the shortest possible time.

In the bitter struggle against the whole world of imperialism the country accepted some limitations of democracy, which even then were regarded as temporary.

It was in these circumstances that Stalin's power and popularity grew, for he had led the fight for socialist construction, and the Party's bitter struggle against all who opposed Lenin's theory that socialism could be built in one country.

Stalin propounded the theory that with the advance of socialism the class struggle grew increasingly sharper; on this basis democratic methods and standards were grossly violated, and the state security organs given extraordinary powers, especially when Beria was put in charge. These conditions helped to make possible the attacks and crimes against totally innocent people.

The struggle to eradicate all this began after Stalin's death, and the arrest of Beria. In the course of the two years before the Twentieth Congress a process of critical revision of many theories and policies was engaged in on the Central Committee, together with the working out of proposals for the reorganisation of the practical work of the Party, and the elimination of all the harmful results of the cult of the individual.

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The Anti-Party Group

In that period serious differences appeared in the Central Committee on fundamental questions. Molotov, Kaganovitch, Malenkov and Voroshilov stood for the old policies and methods. Their thinking was conservative on all questions. This was not a matter of minor differences, but of opposition to the entire general policy being worked out, in the new stage of historical development.

Molotov, the leader of the group, failed to understand the changed balance of forces in the world, with the rapid growth of a large group of socialist countries, and seriously overestimated the strength of the imperialist camp. He could not see that the socialist world was becoming the dominant factor in world development. Before the Twentieth Congress, in a report to a session of the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet, he had openly questioned the fact that a socialist state had been built in the Soviet Union. He therefore rejected the policy of peaceful coexistence, and the major theoretical conception put forward at the Twentieth Congress on the possibility of averting world war in our epoch.

Had his policy triumphed it would have meant the reversal of the entire foreign policy of the U.S.S.R., which has scored such triumphs over the recent years.

Only recently, Pospelov explained, Molotov had raised strong objections to the new programme, as contrary to the revolutionary essence of Marxism-Leninism, particularly to that part which says: "It is not through war with other countries, but by the example of a more perfect organisation of society . . . that the ideas of communism win the minds and hearts of the masses."

In home affairs the group opposed the measure for reorganising the management of industry and building, the development of the new lands, the extension of the rights of the Union Republics; and fiercely resisted the restoration of democratic methods and standards in Party and public life, and of socialist legality.

They were bitterly opposed to the facts on the repressions of the Stalin period being given to the Twentieth Congress; and only agreed to this when told that the question would be decided by the Congress itself. The reason for their bitter opposition was because they themselves were deeply implicated, and personally responsible.

Khrushchov, in his reply to discussion, put it like this: "It is known now that all the abuses of that period were made, not only with their support, but with their active participation."

The group voted for the decisions of the Twentieth Congress, and the Central Committee believed that unity had been achieved. Later it became clear that this was not so. A sharp struggle against the implementation of the Twentieth Congress continued in the Central Committee for over a year.

The report says: . . . "the point at issue was whether our Party would continue the Leninist policy outlined by the Twentieth Congress or whether the methods typical of the period of the cult of the individual, methods condemned by the entire Party, would be revived."

The group hampered the work of the Central Committee and built their group in secrecy; and seized on a suitable moment to try to take control and change the policy of the Party.

The struggle at the time of the Central Committee meeting in June 1957 was difficult. But the group was defeated in its plans by the actions of members of the Central Committee in Moscow insisting that a full meeting should be called.

We were left in no doubt at all about the attitude of the Congress delegates towards the group; and there were continual demands from regional and district delegations for the expulsion of Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovitch. This was referred to the new Central Committee.

The attitude of the delegates to Voroshilov was somewhat different. They clearly hold him in great affection, even after hearing his name coupled continuously with the rest of the group. And when after sharply criticising him, and also explaining that his action in breaking with the group at the June meeting had helped the Central Committee considerably, Khrushchov turned towards him where he sat on the platform and said: "I think that Kliment Yefromovitch will actively fight together with us for the cause of the Party," there was a tremendous burst of applause.

The obvious question that comes to mind about all this is why was the matter discussed at all at this Congress? After all, six years have elapsed since the Twentieth Congress, and over four years since the June Central Committee that routed the Molotov group.

Not only Khrushchov, but many other speakers made it plain that they regarded this discussion as necessary to remind people of what had been done in the past, to contrast it with the tremendous developments now taking place under new conditions. They are determined that such things shall never happen again, and that the people shall not be allowed to forget.

Special interest in this connection attaches to the remarks that Khrushchov made in his reply

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to discussion about praise of himself. There had been a very great deal of praise made of him throughout the discussion, tributes to his leadership in almost every field of work.

> "Everything said about me should be addressed to the Central Committee of our Leninist Party, to the Presidium of the Central Committee. Not a single big step is taken, not a single important speech is made on anyone's personal instructions, but is the result of collective discussion and collective decision. . . . In collective leadership, in the collective solution of all fundamental problems, lies our great strength, comrades."

No leader, he said, however gifted and hard-working, can achieve successes without the help of the collective, and the active work of the entire people. He condemned any inclination to self-praise and any exaggeration of the role of individual leaders; and warned that, in addition to all the steps taken to prevent this happening, the collective must "understand well that a situation must not be allowed to arise where any one, even the most deserving authority, ceases to heed the opinion of those who advanced him".

Safeguards

What are the practical measures taken to safeguard against this?

They are two-fold. First of all the state security agencies have been reorganised, considerably reduced in size, purged of careerists, and their functions strictly defined and limited. Most important of all, their activities are now closely controlled by the government and Party. Shelepin, Chairman of the State Security Committee, said in his speech that no one can now be pronounced guilty of a crime and penalised otherwise than by the sentence of a court.

Secondly, the fullest democracy has been restored in the Party. The Central Committee has ensured regular meetings of all elected bodies. Full meetings of the Central Committee are called regularly to discuss all the major items of policy. These meetings subject the work of leading comrades to sharp criticism.

Regular reporting back by leading comrades is encouraged, and the Central Committee frequently sends out letters to Party organisations on important questions.

It has become the rule not only for the Party membership to discuss major policy questions, but for the people as a whole.

Now in addition to these steps the new rules adopted at the Congress ensure a continual renewal of leadership at all levels. At each election the Central Committee of the Party must change its membership by not less than a quarter; Central Committees of Republican Parties by not less than a third; and area, city and branch committees by not less than one half. In fact this process has been operating in the recent period. Members of the Presidium, in general, cannot be elected for more than three terms. Provision is made for comrades to serve a longer period, because of the importance of maintaining an experienced core of leaders, and giving younger comrades the opportunity to develop to the full; but such comrades must secure at least three-quarters of the vote by secret ballot. This process can be seen in the election of the new Central Committee. It has been enlarged from 133 members to 175. Of the 175, 110 are new members.

The full measure of all that has been done is shown in the giant strides taken in the last six years, and in the growth of the Party. In this period 2,500,000 people have joined, and the membership now is nearly 10 million. One out of every three members has a full secondary or higher education; 70 per cent of them are engaged in industry; nearly 2 million are women.

Albania

The Congress was also concerned over the question of Albania. Khrushchov explained that differences had arisen between the C.P.S.U. and the Albanian Party of Labour, and that these were political differences. The Albanians were no longer concealing their disapproval of the course being taken by the C.P.S.U. at and since the Twentieth Congress, and were not acting in accordance with the common agreed policy of the Communist movement.

In particular they disagreed with the decision of the Twentieth Congress to eliminate all the harmful consequences of the cult of the individual, to restore democratic methods in Party and public life, and reinstitute socialist legality. This is because these same methods are being used in their own Party.

There had also been a worsening of relations between the two governments.

The Discussion

The discussion at the Congress ranged over the whole field of Soviet life. Much of it was sharp and critical; there weren't enough spare parts; there was a bottleneck in the transportation of the harvest; officials in the new lands added to the hardships of the young people by their careless and indifferent attitude to their welfare; there weren't enough nurseries and kindergartens; plans were too slowly carried out; there were people clinging to positions of authority when they no longer gave leadership. And so it went on, with criticisms from platform and floor.

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It is difficult to give an idea of the scope of the discussion—there was Keldish, the Chairman of the Academy of Sciences, unfolding an immense plan of scientific research both fundamental and applied; or Gitalov, the tractor brigade leader from the Ukraine, who described his collective farm, where the whole harvest is carried through without any hand labour; or the women who spoke—all too few—two textile workers; one of them, Garganova, who set the pace in communist labour by leaving her own star brigade to take over a backward team, even though it meant a drop in wages, and brought them to the level of her own, and then went on to tackle more such teams; or Pavlov, the Secretary of the Komsomol. He described how enthusiastically the youngsters had responded to the call of the Party to go to the virgin lands and the desert. Komsomol offices were snowed under with letters. One young lad wrote in saying: "I am ready to go anywhere on the planet, or outside it, wherever the Party asks me to go."

He really went to town over the Academy of Pedagogical Science, protesting that the wonderful plans for education would never be achieved with such a body at the top—sixty-five with an average age of sixty, and only four of them teaching in schools.

And then there was Petrov—staunch old Bolshevik, joined the Party in 1896—declaring to the Congress: "You have said that the present generation of Soviet people will live under communism. I want to live under communism, too."

Thousands of amendments must have been sent in to the Central Committee in the course of the nationwide discussion. All of them were carefully studied; many are being incorporated in the programme. Khrushchov listed several; and the one which brought a really big burst of applause was the proposal to satisfy the demand for nurseries and kindergartens well ahead of schedule, in fact, within the next few years.

Seventy people took part in the discussion on the main reports. Over 270 people wished to speak. In fact some of those who were not able to get in successfully made their speeches in the debate on the rules. In addition, speeches were made by seventy of the fraternal delegates.

The whole Congress was permeated with a tremendous spirit of confidence. Khrushchov said that they are confident they will win the competition with capitalism and that the competition will be won in peace. And the preservation of peace is a vital element in the task of communist construction they are embarking on.

Taking no Risks

But they are taking no risks. The memory of the last war and all its sacrifices is very fresh in their minds. They see it as their duty and responsibility to perfect their weapons to the utmost, to defend their country. And Malinovsky's report on the state of the preparedness of the armed forces was listened to in tense silence. He and Khrushchov together gave a terrifying picture of what the Soviet forces are capable of doing. They have new strategic rocket forces, and rockets that are deadly accurate. Their submarine fleet is equipped with both ballistic missiles and homing rockets. Malinovsky announced that they have solved the problem of destroying missiles in flight. And during the latest manoeuvres troop movements were directed by electronic computers. He spoke of the possibility of surprise attack on the socialist world, and it was made clear that special attention has been given to preparation for the first stage of such a war, for they have no doubts that if war starts it will become a nuclear war, and that the first stage will be decisively important. They warned that they will destroy all the nerve centres of the enemy forces as quickly as possible. And the entire Congress and, I am sure, people, were behind them in the preparations they have made to defend their country.

Yet this was not the main theme of any of the speeches. Right through the proceedings ran the proposal "Let us negotiate—let policies of reason prevail." And the Congress was used to make a passionate appeal for peaceful coexistence and disarmament. No one could be there among them and fail to realise their burning desire for peace.

In the course of the Congress the Programme came to be called "The Communist Manifesto of our Time." And that indeed is what it is. It would be difficult to over-emphasise its momentous character. At the end of these twenty years capitalism will be seen to millions of people all over the world as a dying economic force. The communist society being built will be the greatest bulwark of peace. And millions of people will understand the power of communist ideas.

To us the contrast with capitalist Britain is glaring—a Tory government busy closing down pits and branch railway lines, clamping down a wage freeze and selling out our future to American and West German big business.

We have a great responsibility to explain the programme as widely as possible to our people. And we can be confident that it will enable us to place before them in a fresh and inspiring way the central question of working-class power, the essential for fundamental change in Britain.

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The Aim of the Government's Wages Policy

J. R. Campbell

UNLESS British trade unionists wake up they are going to have imposed on them a state system of regulation (i.e. holding down) of wages under the resounding title of a "National Wages Policy". This policy is supported by the Tory government, the British Employers' Confederation and the right wing of the Trades Union Congress. The Labour Party, more cautiously and equivocally, supported a similar policy in its policy statement *Plan for Progress* before the General Election of 1959, and in its new policy statement *Signposts for the Sixties*. A whole host of economists and bourgeois "experts" on the Trade Union movement are creating the necessary atmosphere for its imposition. In short, a concerted effort is being made to scrap the system of "free collective bargaining" which until recently was regarded as one of the glories of the "welfare state".

Two major reasons are advanced for accepting this policy, namely (1) that it is the only safeguard against inflation, and (2) that it is necessary in order to develop the export drive, which is essential, we are told, for Britain's survival. A powerful picture is drawn of all those who are living on fixed incomes, above all the pensioners, being ruthlessly ruined by rising prices. Those rising prices, it is said, are wholly due to the workers, manual or professional, pursuing their own sectional interests by steadily pushing up wages and salaries. If this tendency is stopped, price increases will stop. Everyone will benefit.

It is admitted that not all inflation in the past has been due to this tendency. The immediate post-war inflation was due to an excess of purchasing power, the direct consequence of the war-time financing. In Britain, the U.S. and elsewhere, the war was very largely financed by short-term loans, which could, in peace time, be turned into cash. Hence there was, in the early years of peace, an excess of purchasing power and a shortage of goods. It was this situation in the post-war period in which, despite price controls, prices continued steadily to mount and wages toiled panting after. The Radcliffe Report on the Workings of the Monetary System described this immediate post-war situation as follows:

> Consumers who had saved [during the war] because the things they wanted were not freely on sale; producers who had saved because they had no hope of being allowed to replace their equipment, still less of expanding their plant in wartime; merchants whose stocks had run down far below the minimum; all were oozing surplus liquidity and it was doubtful if even a large increase in interest rates would stifle their obvious intention of divesting themselves of this surplus. However great the shortage of capital in the sense of current savings, there was no corresponding shortage of liquid funds. The private sector as a whole was plentifully supplied with financial assets, and, in the early post-war years was under little pressure to borrow in order to obtain funds. Not only was self-financing easier out of the accumulated store of wartime reserves, but it remained easier so long as prosperity continued (p. 15).

Note that fourteen years after the end of the war the Radcliffe Committee was accepting the fact that the biggest proportion of the post-war excess purchasing power was in the hands of the capitalist class. It was this which gave the upward pull to prices. In this situation the only remedy possible under the capitalist system would have been a sweeping monetary reform.

> There were good grounds for supposing that nothing short of a thorough-going monetary reform, on the continental model, would have wrung from the system the excess liquidity which had been brought into action by the war. (Radcliffe Report, p. 15.)

Excess Capitalist Purchasing Power

That reform was never undertaken. The excess purchasing power in the hands of the capitalist class continued to pull prices upwards, and following a time-honoured custom, the workers, pushing up their earnings to catch up with prices, were blamed for the whole business. When, in 1948, Sir Stafford Cripps issued his famous White Paper calling for a wage and salary freeze, not a word was said about the excess purchasing power in the hands of the capitalists, which was the heritage of war finance, and which was pulling up prices. The onus for keeping prices steady was in the main put upon the shoulders of the workers. When a great arms boom, which followed the outbreak of the Korean War, gave a further upward twist to the spiral, it was still the workers who were being blamed for forcing up prices

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by their excessive wage demands. Both the effect of the war and the effect of the arms boom were deliberately played down by bourgeois economists and their right-wing Labour camp followers.

With the advent of the "small recession" (1952-53) the wartime excess of purchasing power had been absorbed and new factors began to emerge. The first was the cold-blooded deliberate drive of the government to force up prices of consumer goods and rents. This policy was pursued with the utmost ruthlessness down to our day. Indeed, in the ever-increasing rents for decontrolled and for new houses, we are still enduring its consequences. Yet in bourgeois circles the government's price-raising policy is deliberately played down, and we have an analysis which broadly divides the post-war wages and price situation into two periods. Up till a period variously fixed at 1952 or even as late as 1954, what is called demand inflation, i.e. excess purchasing power as a result of the war, prevailed. It is admitted, in retrospect of course, that it was this factor and not the trade union drive for increased wages, which was largely responsible for the rise in prices. At the most the unions were blamed for perpetuating an inflation whose basic cause was the inflationary situation resulting from the war.

Since 1952 (or 1954) that type of inflation has diminished in importance, it is alleged, and we are now in a period of cost-push inflation where the main reason for higher prices is the annual or biennial wage increases won by the unions. (This analysis, of course, drops conveniently out of sight the deliberate government policy of abolishing controls and subsidies and raising consumer prices and rents.) Contributing to price rises in this situation, it is argued, is the government's stop-start monetary policy. Whenever the British capitalist economy has got into difficulties, the government has raised interest rates, increased hire purchase terms, inaugurated a credit squeeze which has slowed down the economy and reduced productivity, so that when wage increases have ultimately taken place they have been reflected in increased prices. The poor performance of the British economy as compared with its rivals has been due, it is alleged, to a persistent and stupid application of this policy, which from 1959 onwards has been under constant criticism. Some of those criticisms are now reflected in current Tory policy.

Regulation by Taxation

It is held by most bourgeois economists that a capitalist economy can be best regulated, not by varying interest rates and credit facilities (the so-called monetary means), because this leads to comparative stagnation in industrial growth, but by budgetary means, i.e. varying the power of the consumer to buy goods by raising or lowering taxes. This is the policy now pursued by Selwyn Lloyd. The theory is that if consumers' purchasing power tends to be excessive, it should be cut down temporarily by increased taxes; if it tends to be deficient, raise it by giving various tax remissions.

Those who adhere to this policy say that if you try to regulate a capitalist economy by raising or lowering interest rates, you will apply a remedy that is worse than the disease, because it will stop industrial growth, whereas if you attempt to regulate a capitalist economy by manipulating taxes, which reduce or raise consumption, you will obtain the necessary results.

It is argued that such a policy can only be operated if you prevent wage increases. It is no use cutting down purchasing power if the worker is allowed to compensate himself by increased wages and salaries. If you try to control the economy by manipulating taxes you must go from that to controlling wages.

To some bourgeois economists monetary methods on the one hand and budgetary methods on the other are alternative policies. Not so to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. He has simultaneously applied all three methods—dear money, increased prices for consumer goods, and wage pause. Like a hypochondriac consuming all the advertised remedies in the hope that some of them will work, Mr. Lloyd applies all the favourite capitalist economic nostrums, old and new, in the hope that, by chance, some of them will do some good.

"Planning" Wages

There is one distinction about this policy as compared with previous efforts. It deliberately raises prices while halting wage increases. Previously, governments have offered a deal on the basis of "if the unions do their utmost to prevent wages and salaries from rising, the government will do its utmost to prevent prices from rising". It was almost invariably a shyster's offer, for the governments making it were taking steps to raise prices by other aspects of their policy. Nevertheless, it has been left to Selwyn Lloyd quite shamelessly and brutally to couple them within the framework of the same policy and to expound them in the same speeches. Seldom, in the post-war period, has a government displayed such effrontery.

We are promised that sooner or later (and it may be later than we think) the pause will end and we must go over to a long-term wages policy,

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variously described as a national wages policy, or a planned wage policy. Its theoretical basis is that price increases in the present period are due to the trade unions' forcing up wages. If, however, the unions can be persuaded, or in the last analysis compelled, to limit their wage increases, then prices can be brought under control. The general suggestion is that, unless some very special reason can be shown, wage increases should not exceed *the increase of productivity in the economy as a whole*. This is somewhat different from the well-known proposition that wage increases *within an industry* should be related to productivity in an industry. In fact the new proposition *divorces* wage increases in an industry from *productivity* increases within that industry. Suppose the productivity in the motor or steel industry increases by 6 per cent in a given year while the overall productivity in the economy increases by 2 per cent, then Lloyd insists that the earnings of the workers in those highly productive industries must not, unless very special reasons can be shown, increase much more than 2 per cent. In other words the earnings of the workers in the highly productive industries must be held at a lower point than their increase in productivity. How this can be reconciled with incentive payments is not yet explained.

This policy, it is admitted, would in the first instance raise the profits of the big capitalist firms, but it is alleged that this would only be temporary, for those firms would reduce prices.

Comparability of Wages

What is clear about this policy is that the workers whose productivity increases are the highest will be held back and prevented from pushing up their earnings beyond the overall increase of productivity for the economy as a whole. It does not follow from this, however, that the workers whose productivity increases are below the average for the economy are in any way entitled to get a wage increase equal to that average. They are only entitled to extract such an increase from their employers if they have the power to do so, and the general set-up which will emerge from the new policy is calculated to diminish their power. For the sponsors of the new policy, from the Chancellor of the Exchequer downwards, have declared war on "comparability" of wages, in all its forms.

There are two types of comparability. The first refers to the practice of comparing the percentage wage increases achieved by the various industries in the course of a wages movement. Say a situation arises when a round of wage increases is started by some of the larger industries getting an increase of wage rates by 4 per cent. This tends to lay down a pattern for other negotiations. It is alleged that irrespective of the state of an industry, or the strength of a union other employers tend to concede the same general award and so do the various arbitration tribunals. Against this the capitalist economists are in revolt. They argue that there is no justification for other industries receiving the same percentage increase as that industry which has led the wages round. The workers should only get what the industry thinks it can afford and what the workers' organised strength can extract. Employers and arbitration tribunals should set their face against any arguments that "we must have a wages increase because the other workers have got one".

The other type of comparability, that between occupations inside a state department or a nationalised industry, and comparable occupations in private industry, is also under heavy challenge. How should wages be determined in an industry where productivity is certainly increasing but profits are non-existent? The Guillebaud Committee declared that the wages on the railway could be compared with the wages for similar work or work of equal responsibility outside, and railway wages raised accordingly. The British Transport Commission rejects this principle. It declares that the Guillebaud Report of 1959 was a once-for-all operation and that similar comparisons will not determine wages in the future.

In the Civil Service the pay research units are continuously comparing outside salaries with those prevailing in the service and this led at the outset to a considerable boosting of some salaries. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had probably this in mind when he indulged in the following diatribe against comparability.

> If the doctrine of comparability is pushed to its logical conclusion in every set of circumstances, it could bring disaster upon those who it is designed to help. Suppose in the process of collective bargaining a particular group has exploited its scarcity value, is it right that comparability should at once apply and that in the interest of strict comparability all other wages should move accordingly? If we recognise facts something like this is already happening and it can lead to disaster.

Increasing Profits

So the government's wage policy does two things. It prevents workers in high productivity and high profits industries from increasing wage rates and earnings equal to their increased productivity, by decreeing that increases should be

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geared to the average increase of productivity in the economy as a whole; and it tells the workers in industries where productivity is below the national average that in pressing for increased wages they must not argue for the same percentage increase as the workers in the most favourably placed industries, because such comparisons if they lead to wage increases are absolutely disastrous.

The effect of such a policy would be to deliberately increase profits at the expense of wages for the purpose (1) of providing the resources from which firms will plough back increased amounts for capital investment, (2) increase dividends to shareholders, and (3) cut export prices. The government's claim that if the workers in the most productive industries are restrained, those industries will then reduce prices in the home market, ignores the fact that the increased surplus is already earmarked for the above basic capitalist purposes and that little resources will be available for price cutting at home.

This policy throws light on the question which both Tory and right-wing Labour propagandists consistently avoid, namely, where are the resources for the increased capital investment for which they are clamouring to be obtained? The answer of the Tories, embodied in the wages policy above outlined, is to increase productivity and limit or halt wage increases, in short to increase the exploitation of the working class. Labour's *Signposts for the Sixties* points in the same direction. The expansion of the economy has to be achieved first. Increases in wages and social services have to be deferred for some time. It will be noticed that in both schemes abstinence (i.e. forgoing wage increases so that profits can grow) is to be forced on the workers, but that the expanded industries, the increased capital assets, will be the property of the shareholders who have contributed nothing to the process.

New Role of the State

The new posture of the capitalist state in all this should be noted. Formerly it pretended to "hold the ring" between embattled capital and labour. Only in moments of crisis did it intervene openly on the side of the ruling class. Otherwise its function appeared to be to help the collective bargainers to conclude their bargain. Now it is being said that the government in the national interest must have a voice in wage fixing. But if the government is to control wages is it also going to control prices? And will it control profits and rents? Or will it seek to control the economy as a whole, in order to ensure that the most essential activities have a priority? Surely if there is a public interest these things have to be controlled. No, the government is making it clear that only wages are to be controlled.

Please note that I use the term government and not state. For the general aim is not that some pretendedly impartial public body shall arrive at the "guiding light" with regard to wage negotiations, but that this shall be done by the government. Thus the leaders of the Tory Party, the subsidised Party of the monopolists, will use the state to fix wages and salaries in the interests of their paymasters.

Planning and the T.U.C.

The ultimate relation of this wage-fixing policy to the new planning policy of the government is obscure. At the moment they are being kept separate because the T.U.C. is not at this stage prepared to co-operate in the government's policy of wage fixing, but is desperately anxious to have a voice in planning. It appears that what the government is contemplating is mainly investment planning. The various industries (or at least the main firms in them) will outline their plans for the period ahead. These will be examined and it will be clear which industries are not pulling their weight and are, therefore, inviting government actions. When all the plans in all the industries (public and private) are correlated it will be seen whether they are likely to overload the capitalist economy, or be below what is necessary to maintain it at a high level of activity. The Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party are demanding that the planning organisation "must have teeth", that is that either it or the government will have power to force recalcitrant industries and firms to carry out planning regulations that are made. It is difficult to see how the question of wages and productivity can be kept outside this planning body. It will at least have to make forecasts on what the level of productivity will be in the period immediately ahead and this will be used by the government as a basis for its "guiding light" on wages.

So the T.U.C. is merely engaging in tactics. It knows that it would never get working-class support if it participated in an organisation which directly prescribed what the permissible wage increase for the period ahead should be. It can now claim, however, that what it is engaged in doing is planning the economy as a whole and that a big step forward has been taken when a Tory government invites the trade unions to participate. The Tories are anxious, however, to associate the unions with wage planning so that

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ultimately the "guiding light" will be a recommendation not of the government nor of any group of economists or officials, but of the government, the employers and the unions associated on a planning council.

It is worthwhile noting in passing that all this is regarded not as some passing device, to meet the present crisis, but as a permanent change affecting methods of wage negotiation for a long time ahead. Selwyn Lloyd told the House of Commons: "One thing is absolutely clear—that thought must be given to the modification of traditional attitudes and practices, certainly the modification of some of them, so that the undoubted benefits of our existing system can be preserved, while the damaging consequences in the way of inflation are eliminated."

Tie-ups with the Government

In his well-known Penguin book *The Stagnant Society* Mr. Michael Shanks discusses the effect on the Labour Party of unions' closer association with the government. He says the government should

> draw the T.U.C. more closely into the ambit of economic policy making, *as a starting point for establishing some form of wage planning.* This would seem to make sense, not only in terms of economic policy making but of political tactics. It must be, after all, in the interests of Conservative administration to try and weaken the ties which bind the unions to the Labour Party, and the closer the co-operation between the unions and the government the more likely this is to occur. If the unions are offered the choice between indirect participation in government under the Conservatives and the frustrations of marriage with a divided and largely powerless opposition, *many of them may begin to find some virtue in the American formula; whereby the unions avoid formal commitment to either political party but instead sell their favours to the highest bidder* [italics ours].

Why has the British Tory government, which in the past has identified collective bargaining with the very highest qualities of human freedom and well-being, now decided severely to restrict it? The first reason is that the monopoly capitalists in the major capitalist countries having decided, in the teeth of ever more powerful competition from the socialist world, to lay greater emphasis on more stable prices and faster economic growth, have agreed that one of the means of achieving this is for the state, with or without the approval of the right-wing trade union leaders, to exert a downward pressure on wage levels. A similar policy to that advocated for Britain is being operated in Holland, Sweden and Denmark, and its introduction is being seriously discussed in France. State pressure on wages must, therefore, be regarded as typical monopoly capitalist policy at the present stage of development.

There are, of course, two specific British questions associated with its introduction in this country. The first is the feeling widespread amongst the monopolists and their tame economists and statisticians that British manufacturing costs are too high and before we go into the Common Market (and even if we don't) they have got drastically to be reduced. The second, that as British investment has to be increased in order to achieve a faster rate of growth, and as profits are the main source of new investment, the distribution of the product of industry has to be altered in favour of profits. So productivity must be sharply increased while wages are held back. To some extent the capitalists are always doing this, but at this moment the British monopolists are convinced that their whole future is bound up with the state operation of such a policy. So we are faced with a long-term policy that is not likely to be dropped if there is a slight improvement in economic conditions.

Attitude of Right-Wing Labour

The right-wing Labour leaders are firm adherents of the theory and practice of this policy. Their complaint against the Chancellor is that he should not have reduced surtax. Had he not done so they would have no complaint against his wage policy.

From this it follows that there will be virtually no resistance to this policy in Parliament and very little amongst the right-wing trade union leaders. Yet apart from redistributing income, expanding the monopoly resources at the expense of the people, this policy will undermine trade union power and divide the working class.

This Tory policy, encouraged by the temporary victory of the right in the unions and the Labour Party, can and must be fought by the workers throwing all their weight behind the union or industry which is the first to challenge the pause; by the workers making the unions refuse to co-operate in any type of planning whatever with a government which is deliberately holding down wages.

The Labour movement must be won for a positive policy for combating Britain's crisis which must include the drastic cutting down of Britain's enormous overseas expenditure, now running at the rate of £240 million a year; planned development of trade with the Dominions old and new; removal of the bans on East-West trade; state

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supervision of the great monopolies with a view to their full participation in the drive to expand trade and their early nationalisation; massive switch of scientific resources to peace purposes.

Above all, such an immediate programme must be linked with a powerful campaign for socialism in Britain.

There is little to choose between the right-wing leaders and the leaders of the Tory and Liberal Parties, with regard to their basic views of monopoly capitalist society. Basically all of them are technocrats, holding the view that the ownership of the means of production is a minor issue and that what matters is the increased application of new techniques with a view to increased production. As Socialists we deny this proposition. The increased application of technique cannot prevent monopoly capitalism tumbling into a slump, as recent American experience proves; it cannot prevent the profit motive determining how the resources of society are organised, so that socially useful developments are hampered or even rejected. Besides, technique may be only sparsely applied in a society where the rich can make a fortune more quickly by speculation on the Stock Exchange or on land.

We must hammer home to the mass of the people that if science and technique are to be used rapidly to raise living standards, this can only be done by a planned socialist economy, which has eliminated the monopolists and the profit motive. Only then can we have the planned raising of income, wages, salaries and social services as is proposed in the Soviet Union today. Only then can our knowledge and understanding of all potentially new developments be translated into the most rapid growth of the welfare of the people. That is the socialist vision that must inspire us as we struggle to defeat British capitalism's effort to survive at the expense of the British people, and as we win the mass organisations of the workers for socialist advance.

All Wrong About the Unions

J. Hendy

EVERYONE knows that trade unions were not invented by sociologists. Everyone knows that trade unions are the creation of the working class, and that their origin and purpose are the defence and advancement of the interests of working people, who have no other weapon than that of organisation.

How to prevent that weapon's being forged, how to blunt its edge, how to prevent its being used effectively, are problems which have long exercised all the ingenuity of which the employing class is capable. In his autobiography, *Incorrigible Rebel*, Mr. Arthur Horner has recounted the methods to which the former coal owners resorted during the first forty years of this century, methods which were typical of an era of economic depression and which ranged from the setting up of company unions to the use of brute force to cow the workers. All these things were done to preserve the domination of the workers by an employing class, and to defend an economic system based upon exploitation.

Today, with full employment, other methods are required, but the objective remains the same, namely to shore up and preserve a society wherein a small minority exercises economic domination over the vast majority. This domination has long been threatened internally and externally; by the rise of a strong trade union movement at home, by the colonial fight for freedom, and by the advent to world power status of the great Soviet and Chinese republics. Here in Britain, the position of the ruling class can be maintained only by a supreme effort to persuade the dominated majority to sink back into acquiescence, to persuade them that society is run in their own best interests by those best equipped to run it, and to dissuade the working masses from acting in any manner which is not in harmony with the existing pattern of society.

It is in these circumstances that great significance attaches to the recent spate of books and articles which purport to be studies of the British Trade Union movement, and which set out to examine the alleged defects of the trade unions and to suggest means by which their deficiencies may be made good.

None of these books sets out to tell trade unionists how to make strikes more effective, or how to achieve a redivision of the national income. Still less do they give advice on how, without undue struggle, an economic system may be established which shall be free from never-ending insecurity and in which man may find a final

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solution to the problems of economic growth. On the contrary, their message has another and different import. How different, we shall see from an examination of the latest, and perhaps most competent, of the series, a Penguin Special entitled *What's Wrong with the Unions*? written by Eric Wigham.

Mr. Wigham is described by the publishers as labour correspondent of a responsible newspaper, and is said to be "both better informed and more sympathetic to the unions than many of their critics". In fact Mr. Wigham is employed by *The Times*, and his views are set forth with all the diffident, tactful guile with which readers of that newspaper are so familiar. If Mr. Wigham hits below the belt he always shakes hands first. He tells shop stewards how indispensable they are and only afterwards proceeds to prove that they are trouble-makers. In this book, in which his publishers claim that the weaknesses of trade unions are exposed without fear or favour, Mr. Wigham thoughtfully includes one short chapter on the defects of the employers. By this kind of impartial approach Mr. Wigham's magisterial pronouncements are sensed to arise more from sorrow than from anger, and his readers are induced to believe with the legendary Kai Lung that having been spared the axe it is a pleasure to be beaten with a heavy stick.

Part of the Establishment

In his introduction, Mr. Wigham suggests that, after a long history of struggle, by 1951 the unions "had become in a very real sense a part of 'the Establishment'. . . . They had become a part of the body of the state . . . instead of being, as they once were, something outside the state, and in some senses a rival power. . . . Belonging, as they now did, implied loyalty." Mr. Wigham proceeds: "It was partly because they had been so closely woven into the fabric of the community, that the rents they made in the fabric were later so much resented".

The whole of this book is a detailed catalogue of the justifications for this resentment, which began apparently from the time when in 1950 the unions (on the initiative of the E.T.U.) smashed the policy of wage-freeze, and which has reached ever greater heights since the Transport and General Workers' Union under the leadership of Mr. Frank Cousins began to move to the left in 1956. According to Mr. Wigham, by 1958,

> "the public was shocked by exposures of how some members of the trade union movement were behaving at workshop and branch level. Public inquiries revealed little tyrannous empires of shop stewards or branch officials at London Airport, Briggs Motor Bodies, London markets, and elsewhere. . . . There were examples of individuals being persecuted by their unions or fellow workers. A series of absurd demarcation disputes interrupted work at some of the shipyards. Unofficial strikes . . . continued to occur constantly in some sections of industry though for most of them little excuse remained. There were accusations of unscrupulous behaviour by Communists in the unions. And all the time wage claims were large and unceasing and offers of arbitration by employers were frequently refused."

Mr. Wigham feels that the "evidence here and there of irresponsibility and abuse of power has had its effect upon the public mind. According to a Gallup Poll whereas only 12 per cent of the people thought trade unions a bad thing in 1954, 23 per cent thought them a bad thing in 1959."

Mr. Wigham might, of course, have reflected that, as G. K. Chesterton once pointed out, public opinion is not—as you might think—the opinion of the people in the public bar; it is the opinion of the publishers of the public press. However, having raised all the bogies with which the public mind has been afflicted—mainly by Mr. Wigham himself and his fellow servitors of the press—Mr. Wigham sets out "to look at some of the reasons for the public impression that they (the unions) are playing their part inadequately or that they are abusing their privileged position and, in so far as that impression appears to be justified, to consider what remedies may be applied".

The first deficiency found by Mr. Wigham is the loss by the trade union movement of its old-guard right-wing leaders. Nostalgically, he recalls that until the death of Mr. Arthur Deakin in 1955,

> "the policy of the T.U.C. was for practical purposes controlled by a triumvirate consisting of Mr. Deakin, Sir William Lawther, and Sir Thomas Williamson. . . . Sir Lincoln Evans was their able spokesman on economic affairs. Sir Vincent Tewson then General Secretary of the T.U.C. was their able lieutenant."

With the advent of men like Frank Cousins of the T.G.W.U. and later of Will Paynter of the Mineworkers, Mr. Wigham regretfully remarks:

> "With the right thus changing, divided, and confused, it is no wonder they failed to maintain the Deakin tradition. There have been times when they appeared to throw up the sponge. At Congress after Congress, from 1956 onwards they sat glumly in their places while delegates acclaimed economic policies of which they disapproved."

Needless to say, these economic policies ac-

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claimed by the delegates were those which represented the best interests of the rank and file, and which could be implemented only by inroads on the power and profits of the employers.

No Planning of Wages

Mr. Wigham also finds it a defect that trade unions, though calling for a socialist, planned society, do not make a beginning by accepting a planned wages policy. He points out that consequently: "In the period of full employment since the war (there) has been continual competition in wage claims, leapfrogging over each other in a never-ending inflationary succession. . . . That sort of thing makes nonsense of talk about a planned economy.". . . Then he philosophises: "One would not wish to criticise the T.U.C. for having failed to solve the problem of wages under full employment. It has not been satisfactorily solved in any other free country and no one in this country really knows the answer."

One might here observe that the fact that the answer is unknown to Mr. Wigham does not inhibit him from further extensive comment, but he prefers not to notice that the heart of the problem is to be found in the phrase "free country"—a free country being apparently a state in which there is freedom to exploit wage-labour for private profit.

If Mr. Wigham wants a national or co-ordinated wages policy, he makes it quite clear that he does not mean the "co-ordination of policy (which) has been advocated for quite different reasons by men like Mr. Frank Foulkes, the Communist, who want alliances to force up wages more rapidly still".

Mr. Wigham finds the attitude of trade unions towards nationalised industry, to redundancy, and to arbitration equally inexplicable. They seem to treat the first as just another employer, the second as something to be opposed instead of accepting by agreement, and the third to be something to be used only when it suits them. Mr. Wigham sums up: "The movement seems to have lost the capacity to take a broad view of itself and its problems."

Turning to the structure of the British Trade Union movement, Mr. Wigham finds it "quite irrational". The fact that there are a very large number of unions, overlapping and organised on differing principles, appears to him to be a source not only of trouble but of weakness. What the unions would be able to do if, having overcome their weakness, they became stronger, Mr. Wigham does not say, but he clearly implies that the new-found strength should be used not against the employers but against the intransigency of the workers. Clearly no employer would lose sleep if the sole bargaining agent on behalf of an industry was a single "responsible" union in the hands of a right-wing leadership.

Mr. Wigham devotes much space to the losses inflicted upon industry by demarcation disputes, but finds it necessary to expand his list by including at least one "demarcation dispute" which wasn't, namely "the strike which (in 1955) closed the national newspapers (and) was called by the A.E.U. and the E.T.U." This strike was for a pay increase for engineers and electricians as such and had no relation to anyone else. It is of interest to note that—though Mr. Wigham is too modest to mention it—Mr. Wigham's own union, the N.U.J., utilised the period and circumstances of this dispute to step in and secure a substantial increase for themselves.

Shop Stewards

It is, however, only when he turns to the subject of shop stewards that Mr. Wigham really lets himself go. Paying the customary brief tribute to the fact that "the great majority are worthy and painstaking servants of the membership", Mr. Wigham proceeds to deal with what he calls "shop steward empires", giving as "remarkable illustrations" those at Briggs Motor Bodies and at London Airport.

Dealing with the Court of Inquiry into the London Airport dispute of 1958, Mr. Wigham gives pride of place to the "remarkable feature of this inquiry (which) was the evidence given by Mr. Jim Matthews of the N.U.G.M.W., then the Secretary of the National Joint Council" who "identified the trouble-making element as the Communist Party cell which he said had been set up at London Airport". As those who were present at the inquiry know, however, Mr. Matthews' "evidence" of this "cell" was based upon the inferences he drew from certain passages of the works of Lenin, which he read aloud from a volume of *The History of the Communist International*, published by the Institute of International Affairs, and which had presumably been drawn to his attention by a member of his staff who thought Lenin was still alive and in charge of organisational work.

Mr. Wigham does not mention the fact that Mr. Matthews, who had already been repudiated by the unions as their spokesman, was subsequently obliged to resign his office as Secretary of the National Joint Council; and, of course, Mr. Wigham finds it equally convenient not to mention that the report of the Jack Court of

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Inquiry which found the chief shop steward Mr. Maitland to be "subversive", and Mr. Ian Mikardo, M.P., as "evasive and mischievous", was itself rejected by the N.J.C. and that all unions involved in the strike paid official dispute benefit to their members.

Mr. Wigham's treatment of the 1958 Airport Dispute reveals ignorance and prejudice wherever he touches upon it; e.g., his assertion in a later section of his book, that shop stewards prevented members from receiving an official recommendation to lift an overtime ban, is a falsehood, as the official record shows. Similarly the British Oxygen strike of 1959 is dug up as an example of the manner in which "trouble-makers often take advantage of inadequate communications, but trouble may arise without their aid". This is such an old story that one wonders why Mr. Wigham has never found time to talk the matter over with the T.G.W.U. national officer concerned, who would quickly disprove this hoary legend.

Unofficial strikes clearly incur Mr. Wigham's wrath. In a revealing passage, indicating the way in which news is "angled" by the press, he writes:

> "In 1959 newspapers suddenly began to describe unofficial strikes as wildcat strikes, a term that had been used in the United States for many years. It appeared to have the effect of putting the strikers psychologically on the defence and of intensifying the already great public irritation. A good many people were arguing at that time that they should be made illegal."

Referring to the report of the T.U.C. General Council arising from its inquiry in 1959 into unofficial disputes and the position of shop stewards, Mr. Wigham enthuses: "The report went on, with some courage, to advocate disciplinary action against members taking part in strikes contrary to the general policy or specific advice of their union."

There is nothing here to suggest that Mr. Wigham's conception of individual freedom—to which he devotes a specific chapter—includes the right of the workmen themselves to decide whether or not to withdraw their labour. In this, of course, Mr. Wigham has not yet advanced to the position taken up by the Edwardian legislature which in the 1906 Trades Disputes Act defined a trades dispute as "any dispute between employers and workmen, or between workmen and workmen which is connected with the employment or non-employment, or the terms of employment, or the conditions of labour, of any person. . . ." There is nothing there to suggest that an "unofficial" dispute has any less status than one for which union benefit or approval is given. The essential factor in constituting any dispute is clearly the participation of the workmen.

Collective Freedom

One conception of which Mr. Wigham seems never to have become aware is that of *collective* freedom. This deficiency enables him to regard the boycotting of blacklegs, the insistence on common rates of pay and output, the maintenance of the closed shop, as all examples of dictatorship and abuse of power.

Restrictive practices are another subject of dismay and anger to Mr. Wigham, who devotes to this matter a chapter significantly entitled: "Descendant of King Ludd", and he dilates at length upon unions which "insisted on pay on a skilled basis for work which no longer required their training, knowledge and experience", which "laid emphasis on resistance to the introduction of time study". The views of an employers' federation are given, suggesting that:

> "Restrictions practised by workers but not attributed to unions included stint working and other ways of limiting output, late starting and early finishing, unauthorised tea intervals, and going slow when new plant was installed, with a view to the establishment of unduly high piece rates."

Mr. Wigham comments upon the fact that these phenomena are found in many industries and is clearly perturbed that in the docks, "in London, Liverpool and elsewhere it is said that excessive time is taken for . . . tea-breaks", not to speak of "the readiness of dockers to strike on the slightest pretext", while "the readiness of miners to strike on the slightest pretext is even more remarkable".

Nowhere, of course, does Mr. Wigham suggest that workers are, under an economic system motivated by profit, entitled to protect themselves from increasing exploitation, nor does he anywhere indicate that workers are collectively entitled to claim the maintenance of hard-won standards and conditions, and to a full and increasing share of the wealth produced by their industry and effort. Mr. Wigham omits, too, to mention the fact that a trade union must, in fact and in law, impose restrictions if it is to be a trade union at all. Failure so to do would not only quite obviously let employers run industry as and how they liked, thus reducing the unions to the position of sick-benefit and funeral societies, but would deprive them of the right even to give legal representation to their members. The Trade Union Acts make it quite clear that a union is "a combination . . . the principle objects of which are

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under its Constitution the regulation of relations between workmen and masters . . . or the imposing of restrictive conditions on the conduct of any trade or business. . . ." An organisation which did not fulfil these terms has in fact been held not to be a trade union and not to enjoy the rights given to unions by the law (see Performing Rights Society v. London Theatre of Varieties (1924), a decision of the House of Lords).

Mr. Wigham, however, seems to imagine that the true Jerusalem of all trade unions is their recognition as a part of the production, welfare, and first-aid departments of the capitalist establishment, and it is with profound regret that he discovers that in connection with the drive for increased productivity and the elimination of all restrictive practices "it can hardly be said that the undoubted enthusiasm at Congress House is reflected among all the union leaders, let alone the men in the workshops". No doubt the men in the workshops would prefer that any enthusiasm at Congress House should be developed in quite another direction.

Communism

Of course, no book which "sets out to examine the defects of the trade unions" would be complete without a study of the "subversive influence" of communism. Mr. Wigham devotes some colourful writing to the presentation of a picture of this menace. "Taking the movement as a whole," he says, "it is probably fair to say that in the past twelve years the communist offensive has been halted and that they have been forced back on important sections of the front. . . ."

One wonders why he did not find space to include the lengthy article (written by himself) which not long ago appeared in *The Times,* dealing with "The Twelve Year War". In this he outlined the campaign, begun by that paper, following the accession to office as General Secretary of the E.T.U. of the late Mr. W. C. Stevens in 1948, and which has culminated recently in an all-out anti-communist drive by Church and state, the T.U.C., the Labour Party and the whole of Fleet Street.

Mr. Wigham has no doubts about the nature of this communist menace. He quotes with authority what Lenin said in 1920, and what Mr. John Gollan said more recently. "The Communists," declares Mr. Wigham, "concentrate their attention on the work-places. 'No matter how effective communist work is outside the factory gates it is work inside by our factory comrades and organisations, that is decisive', Mr. Gollan, the Party Secretary has said. These sentiments are constantly repeated."

Worse still, they are acted upon. "By 1948," opines Mr. Wigham, "their progress had been formidable," and he outlines all the positions of importance held by Communists in the Trade Union movement. This, of course, was the point at which *The Times* gave the signal to commence the Twelve Year War, to which the General Council gave its blessing by the issuing of its own calls-to-arms entitled "Defend Democracy" and "The Tactics of Disruption". Mr. Wigham seems not to notice, of course, that these pamphlets were issued at the moment when the General Council and the employers were advocating and enforcing the policy of wage-freeze, against which the Communists organised the resistance of the rank and file.

But Mr. Wigham has no doubt as to the true nature of Communists. According to him, the "advantage which Communists have over others is that they are more unscrupulous in their methods. It is part of their doctrine that the end justifies the means." This profound piece of analysis enables Mr. Wigham to draw the obvious conclusion: the Communists "damage the unions because their primary concern is to forward the interests not of the members, except possibly in a vague long-term sort of way, but of the Soviet Union. . . . They damage the unions even more . . . because there is pressure on . . . their non-Communist opponents . . . all the time to rival the Communists in militancy to secure the support of union members".

It is not surprising that he ends his book with a list of "prescriptions" for the ills of trade unions which would do almost everything except enable them more effectively to carry out the purpose for which they exist.

Mr. Wigham should have attended personally the London Airport Inquiry about which he has written so much. Had he done so he might have heard the trade union official spokesmen give their classic definition of trade unions: "They are not an extension of the employers' personnel departments, they exist to serve the interests of the workers . . . they are an offensive and defensive weapon in the hands of labour. . . ." He might have heard the workers described as "honest, loyal, responsible, and intelligent people".

But Mr. Wigham—one suspects—knows that such people exist, that they are organised, and that they can still throw up men of ability to lead them. If it were not so, the employing class would not call upon able propagandists in the attempt to prove the contrary.

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A Note on Trade Unions and Cultural Activities

Cadmus

IN 1960 a resolution was carried at the Trades Union Congress requesting the General Council to conduct a special examination and to make proposals to ensure a greater participation by the Trade Union movement in all cultural activities. The General Council prepared a very deep and detailed report for this year's Congress, and, apart from criticisms that the proposals "did not go far enough", it was welcomed and adopted. As might have been expected, what the report lacked in world-shattering ardour, it made up for in its workmanlike analysis; the proposals for action showed a true appreciation of the tight hold by the controllers—mainly commercial—of the *mass media*, and it is largely with this aspect of the situation that this note is concerned.

The General Council noted that the sponsors of the original resolution first implied that the growing leisure-time available to workers would call for more facilities for cultural activity, and then suggested that the Trade Union movement itself should undertake to a greater extent the direct promotion and encouragement of the various forms of cultural expression. It is clear from the repetition of this latter point in the General Council report that they did not wish to get too far involved—this was something on which the whole proposal might have floundered. Near the beginning of the report the General Council states that it believes "that the two questions—that of enabling large numbers of workers to participate more fully in the cultural life of the community, and that of the extent to which the Trade Union movement should directly promote cultural activities—were not necessarily directly related; and that the bearing of one upon the other was almost certainly more complex than the resolution suggested."

A resolution of the 1943 Congress had looked forward to the peacetime flowering of leisure, and the General Council's report of 1946 examined the complex groundwork of the relationship between working and social life. The scale and equality of facilities for sport, recreation, entertainment, adult education and culture would, said the 1946 report, be affected by the tendency for commercial organisations to be influenced primarily by commercial considerations, that the development of critical popular standards depended upon public discussion and education, and that without reasonable public assistance to independent individuals and voluntary organisations many worthwhile cultural activities might be neglected.

The complexity of the pattern of cultural activity in Britain was shown in surveys of two predominantly working-class Lancashire towns, Rochdale and Bolton; here were a large number of cultural organisations; yet as the 1961 T.U.C. report says: "It is, nevertheless, undeniable that the majority of workers remain culturally deprived, and that an active interest in the arts remains confined to an unduly limited number." In delving deeper, the report shows that the housing situation of many workers in urban areas is an obstacle to more active cultural pursuits, "while even the most extensive development of transport facilities cannot bring workers in some rural areas within effective reach of any established cultural centre". Further, the predominant cultural influences—largely created by commercial interests seeking to attract mass audiences, and exploiting both the lack of adventure in most workers' lives and their lack of "adequate education"—to which workers are exposed in society today contribute little to the development of a more general interest in the arts. With education for the great majority ceasing at fifteen, workers' general education "has been neither wide enough to create in them a full awareness of their cultural heritage, nor sufficiently sustained to develop the degree of emotional maturity and of mental stamina and discipline needed for a rewarding appreciation or practice of any of the arts".

The General Council believes that:

> The determined effort continuously and skilfully directed by those responsible for mass commercial entertainment at capturing and retaining the attention of young people, is a particularly important factor.

Later on the General Council says that any action taken by trade unions must try both to help modify what affects the attitude of workers to the arts and cultural activities, and also to secure increased opportunities for workers to take

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part in such activities. Here the T.U.C. comes to grips with the most powerful—and, therefore, most important—influences at work in controlling what is given to the British people to think about in their leisure hours, and the report is fully aware that commercial television has affected the situation.

General Council's Suggestions

After dealing with the inadequacy of public financial support for the arts, which "has inevitably limited the scale of provision of non-commercial cultural facilities and has thus restricted access to such facilities by workers (and by members of the community generally)", the General Council of the T.U.C. puts forward a number of suggestions, and it is in this section that some interesting avenues of approach are given. Opportunities for useful work are seen in local voluntary societies and in works-based organisations of some firms or staff associations, usually established for welfare purposes, and there is already evidence that people associated with the sponsorship of the 1960 T.U.C. motion are trying to stimulate such organisations to take the initiative on a local basis.

In performing such functions as improving working conditions (which can affect workers' capacity to pursue active leisure time), improving housing accommodation and providing either local cultural facilities in new housing areas or adequate transport in remoter districts, restricting and diminishing the degree of exploitation of the leisure time of workers by commercial interests (which inhibits and distorts workers' appreciation of the arts), and expanding and improving the educational service, the Trade Union movement can carry out a large amount of most useful activity which will lay the foundations for the development of culture and the arts in Britain. The work of trade unions and trades councils in this field is not new, of course, but the proper understanding of the relationship of culture to such activities has not always been so plainly stated within the Trade Union movement. The report says:

> An increased awareness of the need to ensure the highest possible standards in every facet of life and work of trade unions, and to encourage critical standards of judgment about such matters among trade union members, could indirectly assist in creating a wider basis for increased participation by trade unionists in all cultural affairs. A more active interest by trade union organisations in such affairs, and a more positive encouragement of members to participate in cultural activities, could itself contribute to a change of attitude on the part of trade unionists.

The report returns to the value of workers developing more critical standards later, when it urges workers to support and strengthen local voluntary societies. One may make the comment here, that while such societies may of themselves make little impact, when compared with the purveyors of mass entertainment (which is so greatly in commercial hands), they do provide the nursery for a more critical attitude by workers of mass culture. The national responsibility of more adequate provision by public authorities, national and local, is stressed by the report:

> A firmer commitment to the task of sustaining and strengthening the cultural life of the community, and a more imaginative approach to that task, is required of all public authorities, and *the Trade Union movement, nationally and locally, should be alert to use its influence to that end on all appropriate occasions* [italics mine—C.].

As well as the opportunities for work in such ways, the General Council suggests also the opportunities provided by local educational authorities, in which there is a need for expansion; recreational needs of old people, housewives and shift-workers are particularly in need of attention. Local trade union branches and trades councils, says the report, might especially consider the arrangements, which could be made for trade unionists to interest themselves more directly in the activities of local dramatic, musical, art and film societies, and for some activities of such organisations to be related to local trade union activities. In this context, as well as in the wider one, the belief of the General Council that the promotion and encouragement of cultural activities should arise naturally from the life and work of the trade union organisations with which members most readily identify themselves is most significant.

The Cost Factor

Apart from marking special occasions, the General Council points to the cost factor as the one that militates against the direct patronage by trade unions. It had been suggested to the General Council that the Trade Union movement should in some way sponsor a national symphony orchestra, the promotion of a series of concerts, the publication of new literary works, the sponsoring or commissioning of works of graphic art, plays and films. The General Council evidently has not been convinced that it can jump from the present position of the Labour movement to a Socialist one, when such activities may rightly be within the province of the T.U.C. It

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gave an example of the costs involved in such enterprises—the net annual operating costs of five national symphony orchestras, grant-aided by the Arts Council, averaged £61,000. Such a figure is a flea-bite in the mechanical entertainment media of film and television. To make just one feature film would cost about double the annual cost of a symphony orchestra, so a steady flow would cost astronomical sums—even if such films could be shown in existing commercial channels without the added cost of establishing a national distribution network.

The studies by voluntary organisations in recent years of the changes in the character of film and television entertainment lend great encouragement to the view, so often expressed by the T.U.C., that a critical attitude by workers towards the popular arts can effect great improvements. In some media—particularly motion pictures—it has been a world-wide reaction that has caused quite significant changes in the content of Hollywood pictures. A more humanist approach by Hollywood was seen some years ago with *Marty*—long before our native film-makers succeeded with their break-through. The fact that a more acceptable sophistication is evident in crime films and those that glorify war shows that the battle of ideas is only just beginning.

What is Scientific Thinking?

John Lewis

THE greatest discovery of the modern world is not to be found in any special field of science. *It is the method of scientific thinking itself.*

Moreover, it is a method that is valid outside the limits of the natural sciences, for there are not two kinds of thinking—one for science and the other for everyday life, history, politics and the humanist disciplines, but only *one* kind of thinking. The basic principles of the scientific method are everywhere applicable and necessary if we want to find the truth.

But the scientific method must not be narrowly construed as the mathematical procedures of such sciences as physics and astronomy, as the method which limits itself to the measurable. Bertrand Russell has pointed out that a very considerable range of scientific thought does not depend upon measurement—one could mention the major part of biological thinking, most psychology and archaeology, and anthropology. Nor in declaring that all valid thinking conforms to scientific method do we mean to limit it either to strict logical deduction or the mere organisation of empirical data of observed facts.

Hypothesis and Experiment

Scientific thinking is the method of combining observation and experiment with imaginatively conceived hypotheses. The use of hypotheses, it must be noted, does not simply follow the accumulation of facts, it precedes it as well. No scientist collects facts indiscriminately, he *selects* them, guided by some preliminary point of view or hypothesis. As Darwin said: "It is odd that anyone should not see that all observation must be for or against some view, if it is to be of any service." Having collected all the relevant facts obtainable, the next step will be the recasting of the preliminary hypothesis or the framing of a new one. No such hypothesis will be a mere deduction from the facts; it will be suggested by analogy, reached by intuition, by imagination—a leap beyond the facts.

But however attractive as seeming to render the facts coherent and rational, it remains to submit such a hypothesis to crucial experiment or exhaustive observation of further facts, particularly of such facts as one would expect to find only if the hypothesis is correct. If by the nature of the hypothesis no facts could invalidate it, then the hypothesis is not a valid one and cannot be allowed. If a hypothesis stands up to verification so far, it becomes a *theory*.

What follows depends upon the nature of the science. Almost always experimental experience may warrant putting the theory to practical use, and this will provide further evidence as to its reliability. In all cases the theory will be used to extend the range of observation, suggesting fresh fields for investigation and obtaining much new factual data.

Every theory is essentially a guide and a stimulus, an invitation to exploration, to constructive or reconstructive effort. It is at this stage that the most complete verification of a theory is obtained. When a theory is used in this way it will be found to throw new light on old problems, to open up new perspectives, to give rise to *new problems* and *new difficulties*. It is, there-

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fore, inevitable that, paradoxically, it is the good theory that creates the necessity for its own modification, or for the formulation of extensions. Its very success carries us beyond its own scope and reveals its inadequacies and limitations.

What is important here is to realise that a theory is not to be judged merely by its capacity to explain or even to stand up to experimental verification. It is finally tested in application; and application, as well as experiment, will invariably demand the revision and extension of any theory.

With whatever modifications are required by the special subject matter concerned, this method of thinking is the only valid one in every department of thought and action. In sociology it is the kind of thinking that produces the Marxist theory, and that modifies and extends it as it is put into practice.

Explanations that do not Explain

The importance of scientific method will become clear if it is compared and contrasted with the methods of non-scientific thinking. This can take two forms:

(a) Explanation by postulating vital forces, principles, potentiality, purpose in the non-mental, or "ends" to which things are unconsciously and inevitably tending.

(b) Explanation by myth, by a story or theory which harmonises and rationalises the facts, building them into a coherent and satisfying system, which makes sense of facts which were previouly confused and chaotic.

None of these explanations are capable of being submitted to a crucial test since they are merely explanatory, none of them are capable of being put into practice, all of them are such that they are compatible with any facts which subsequent experience may bring to light. Their sole justification is that they satisfy the mind and this is not enough.

(a) On postulating vital forces

Let us consider the attempt to explain by postulating some mysterious vital force, or supernatural agency, or "end" towards which things necessarily develop.

The simple answer to any such proposal is that we are doing no more than give a name to our ignorance. The "vital force" or "potentiality" is obviously a *stop gap,* invented *ad hoc*. Every case of difficulty, every instance where we can find no explanation, is covered by postulating *X*. But what explains everything explains nothing. The proposal is not a rational one.

This fallacious method has been used in biology and bio-chemistry, in attempts to explain evolution, in psychology, and in history. In biology the remarkable capacity of organisms for self-adjustment was once ascribed to some faculty of "life". We now have a perfectly comprehensible biochemical explanation for all these remarkable phenomena. And they are remarkable. To substitute a vitalistic cause for these is, of course, to obstruct research and is to offer a theory which, by the nature of the case, cannot be tested. In fact physiologists and bio-chemists have rejected the method and have crossed the unbridgeable gaps, driving vitalism back from one position to another.

Another form of this theory invents "instincts" to account for every variety of human and animal behaviour. A favourite case is the "aggressive" instinct which explains war. Depth psychology has invented a great number of subconscious urges, the Oedipus complex, and the like. All such theories are substitutes for scientific thinking, satisfying the mind with a word to cover our ignorance and standing in the way of real investigation.

This method is also used to explain the past by the present, reading every biological or historic process in the light of its last term. Thus, if life appears at a particular moment, it is asserted that it was always there in an indiscernible form or in potentiality. If mind appears, everything from man to the atom has "mind", but it is not apparent, or only there as promise and potency in non-thinking matter. Thus all later stages are regarded as existing pre-formed in the earlier stages. In history what happens is explained as the inevitable unfolding of events, as predetermined by the end towards which they move, or as controlled by Providence. (This "historicism" is frequently confused with Marxism, which on the contrary is a genuinely scientific theory.)

Clearly, this kind of explanation cannot be tested, explains anything and everything, and is totally useless in guiding action or controlling matters and events.

Theories of this kind do not enable us to do things that we could not do before. For example, if we suppose that disease is due to some mysterious cause or tendency we are helpless; we may think we are explaining it, but we certainly cannot prevent it. But if we find the bacterial cause we are on the way to find how it enters the body, to prevent infection, to develop methods of securing immunity and eventually to control the disease.

(b) Explanation by myth

The second form of unscientific thinking explains by providing a theory (like the guess of

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a detective to explain the clues, or the pre-scientific myth to explain natural events) designed simply to link the facts in ways which make sense. Now while every sound theory must show coherence and comprehensiveness, not every theory that offers a coherent and comprehensive explanation is valid. These are *necessary* conditions of truth, but not *sufficient* grounds for validity.

This method is the one adopted by theology and metaphysics. It has long been regarded as unsatisfactory. Thus the ultimate rationality of the universe may be affirmed, or the operations of an all-wise Providence, the theory being designed to provide an "explanation" for apparent irrationality or evil. Thus we are told that our dissatisfaction with the irrational, our desire to discover reason behind the chaos of experience, is conclusive evidence that such an order already exists, otherwise we would not be seeking it. Or it may be argued that from the standpoint of the Absolute all apparent evils are necessary, these being aspects of the Good *if seen from the standpoint of eternity*, so that as one philosopher put it: "the very presence of evil in the temporal order is the condition of the perfection of the eternal order".

It is obvious that we have here a theory that is compatible with any state of affairs whatever; as such it is unacceptable. In effect it does no more than sanctify the world as it is with all its evils, and the confusion of thought with all its contradictions. It paralyses action since it persuades people that things could not be better than they are.

> All discord harmony not understood;
> All partial evil, universal good;
> And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
> One Truth is clear, whatever is, is right.

(*c*) *The myths of history*

Some theories of history are of a mythological nature, for example Toynbee's cyclical theory which explains the rise and fall of some twenty-two civilisations, each passing through the same phases. It is objected by historians that Toynbee has selected and manipulated his facts to suit his theory. Any number of alternative theories could be formulated after this pattern. This is not scientific history.

(*d*) *Myths in psychology*

Many of the theories of Freud and Jung, though by no means all of them, are of the mythological type. Explanation of the same dream can be offered by psychologists working with rival theories which are all quite different, nor is there any way of proving one or any of them correct.

Mythological Explanation Unacceptable

(1) There can be a number of rival interpretations of this kind. This accounts for conflicting theologies and metaphysical systems, theories of history and interpretation of dreams. There is no accepted method of testing the truth of such theories. It is a case of "your guess is as good as mine", and that is not scientific thinking.

Science is intolerant in the sense that good theories drive out bad ones. The one that triumphs has conformed to the tests which, in each particular field, have come to be accepted as decisive. No theory can be substantiated by merely pointing to the facts which it was invented to fit into its scheme. This is arguing in a circle.

(2) No theory is acceptable which is so constructed as to be consistent with any facts which either exist at present or may turn up tomorrow, or may be obtained by further observation and experiment.

(3) A satisfactory hypothesis must not contract out of the body of systematic and accepted knowledge, by introducing totally new and arbitrary factors not consistent with known laws. The same objection applies to postulated vital forces and supernatural agencies. This rule does not preclude extension and modification of known laws which are always being made.

(4) Such theories are not only incapable of being tested but are entirely useless. They do not help us to control events. Whatever we do is equally satisfactory to the theory. Whatever happens is consistent with it. If we do nothing at all, the theory still remains to "explain" things. This is an example of what Chesterton called the fallacy of satisfying the mind with a full and false explanation.

The criterion offered is the pragmatic one of proving satisfactory. But science has advanced by rejecting theories that merely pleased for those that proved true.

Changing the Mind v. Changing the World

The world is a difficult place. It is full of difficulties and dangers. Man seeks for security and he can attain it in two ways. If he can he will try to control the external world, to subdue it to his purposes. If he is too ignorant to do that he must change his own attitude to life's frustrations, by some consoling or reassuring "explanation" of life's evils. Then he may turn to the supernatural, to theological beliefs, to metaphysical theories. He invokes the cosmic to rectify the world's evils; he projects the good he cannot achieve into the eternal.

Scientific explanation works in the opposite way. It explains so as to show men how to gain effec-

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tive control of things, to get to grips with evil, to overcome it or diminish it.

The Question of Prediction

It is sometimes claimed that a scientific theory anticipates the future correctly and so is useful, or can predict the consequences of an experiment or of the movements of planets by exact calculation. If so, then any system of thought which fails in exact prediction is not scientific.

But this is only true of some sciences.

This claim is really designed to detach as much thinking as possible from scientific method and open the door to dogma, supernaturalism and metaphysical speculation. It is common practice for those who dislike and fear science to try to identify scientific method with measuring techniques which are supposed to produce exact results; the implication is that where the material does not allow for exact calculations arising from the use of instruments, there can be no scientific thinking. Therefore thinking outside the sphere of mathematical prediction is independent of scientific criteria. But the sole criteria of scientific thinking is the possibility of verifying hypotheses, and this is possible in the humanistic and biological sciences as well as in the chemico-physical sciences.

Prediction can be of the first importance in astronomy, physics, engineering and economics. The astronomer predicts a deflection in the orbit of a planet, or an eclipse; an aeronautical engineer constructs the prototype of a new plane on the basis of his theories; then he goes up with the test pilot to see whether his predictions are verified. The result, if he survives, may be that his theories are substantiated; or on the other hand they may be contradicted or may require modification. An economist may predict that inflation will raise prices, or over-saving lead to unemployment.

All this is important but it tends to give the impression of waiting to see what happens. There is nothing much else to do in astronomy; one cannot interfere with the movements of the planets. But it is *not* the scientific attitude in those departments where man puts his knowledge into practice. In medicine, for instance, one does not merely diagnose the disease and then wait to see whether the patient dies as is predicted. Diagnosis points to treatment. The same should be true in economic analysis and in psychological investigation. Here science does more than predict, it intervenes and makes a fresh anticipation of what it hopes to bring to pass by so doing, then it seeks to *make* that prediction come true.

Marxism is often considered as if it were a predictive system like astronomy, as if it predicted the coming of socialism as something inevitable and independent of man's understanding and efforts. If so Marx is judged as a prophet who foretells the future, like *Old Moore's Almanac,* and is judged by whether his predictions come true. But Marx is not a prophet. He *diagnoses,* he analyses the historic process, he advances a theory of economic development, and he seeks to awaken men by the understanding that he gives them to participate actively in the class struggle and thus brings about certain important changes in human affairs. But Marxism has never taught that socialism will come into existence independently of human understanding and will, as the inevitable consequence of deep lying economic forces.[1]

But no one can accurately predict the future in so complicated a field as that of society in transition. What we can expect from a really scientific analysis is adequate guidance to lead us in the right direction. If this succeeds we bring into existence a new situation, with new possibilities, in which a new estimate of the balance of forces has to be made and new plans of action formulated.

The Sum of Verified Knowledge

Scientific thinking, in every field, establishes verified knowledge, a growing body of tested and accepted theory. It does so because in each field certain criteria have been adopted on the basis of experience which weed out truth from falsehood. These criteria are quite different in the physical sciences from the biological; and different again in the humanistic sciences. Sometimes the method involves laboratory experiment, sometimes astronomical observation, sometimes digging up the past, sometimes field observations. Wherever it is possible to apply and use theories, as in medicine and engineering and psychology and sociology, an added type of verification is possible.

The scientific method has succeeded in all these fields in securing general agreement over wide areas. This is not contradicted by the healthy continuance of disagreements, discussion, further experiment and search for facts on the margins of advancing science. Contrast this with the *endless* controversy and futile discussions in the realm of mere speculation, theology, metaphysics and superstition. Here there is confusion, but in science the achievement of agreement. No

[1] The reader may like to work out for himself what meaning can be attached to "the inevitability of socialism" if it is dependent upon human understanding and intelligence.

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scientist can get away for long with a phoney theory. Someone will find the facts to refute it, or conduct the experiments to test it. But a "theory" which is consistent with any facts whatsoever can never be refuted—or established—so futile debate continues indefinitely.

Class Bias

Of course, in the social sciences the issue is bedevilled by class interests, and we enter the world of ideology, in the objectionable use of the word. Class bias can, of course, invade most spheres of knowledge, but in the long run truth comes into its own, as undoubtedly it will in the social sciences in the long run. Here experiment and experience are refuting false theories and endorsing true ones all the time. The verdict of history is the judgment of truth.

Scientific theories never become fixed because they are continually applied and as a consequence are always being revised and extended. Sometimes, indeed, after proving useful for some time they are drastically reformulated. When a theory is used it also brings new facts to light, opens up new vistas, makes it urgently necessary to devise fresh methods of observation and experiment, so that improved apparatus is invented. This in turn opens up new perspectives. The more successful a theory proves to be the more it reveals its own inadequacies and brings about its own revision. This is the dialectic of scientific progress.

Metaphysical theories cannot be applied, are not used, and therefore are not tested. In consequence they become dogmas and do not change. They remain stuck in the mythological stage of human thinking.

Is Marxism a dogma or a scientific theory? If it is the latter, and of course it is, we shall expect it to change and develop because it is being applied. This in fact is what has happened. Lenin advanced Marxism beyond Marx, and Stalin, Mao Tse-tung and Khrushchov have developed it still farther, and it is still advancing.

The Marxist who thinks his theories are final has ceased to be a Marxist, and has become a theologian.

Marxism in the Modern World

How is Marxism applied to real life? How is it verified, and in successful use extended and corrected? Not, of course, as an explanatory myth, not as a rigid dogma, not as a destiny over us moving history to a predetermined end; but as an analysis and diagnosis of social development, as helping us to get hold of the right end of the stick, as a guide to action, as the kind of explanation that reveals new possibilities and creates new responsibilities.

On the plane of history Marxism has brought into existence the great socialist governments of a quarter of the world and has guided them to increasing measure of success. The confidence of these new societies in their future stands in the sharpest contrast to the confusion and pessimism of the capitalist world.

It would be as surprising as if medicine never let a man die if Marxism never made a mistake. But as Lenin once said: "We may sometimes say that two and two make five, but we never say that they make a wax candle."

Nearer home, compare the Marxist analysis of events over the past forty years, in particular over the period of the economic crises, of the rise of fascism, the Munich days, and the whole post-war epoch, with that of the non-Marxist theoreticians, economists and experts in foreign affairs. Here at every step there has been correct diagnosis and guidance for action. In spite of errors and shortcomings we know that this has been the road to follow and is the only road that will lead us out of the contradictions of our modern age.

Marxists are continuously engaged in re-examining their interpretation of events in the light of their own intervention and the developments that occur. Theory and practice march hand in hand. Mistakes are corrected, accurate estimation of tasks and new opportunities is vindicated.

The Problem of Evil

Worried people talk about "the problem of evil" and ask the philosophers and theologians to explain the mystery of the world's suffering. There is no problem of evil. There are only problems and evils; and the problems are not insoluble, and the evils are remediable, if we want to tackle them practically. We have not to occupy our minds in trying to explain why there is evil in the world, as though a satisfactory theory would reconcile us to life's miseries. We have to ask what are the actual causes of hunger and disease and war, and having found them, set ourselves to work to eliminate them.

Scientific thinking means that sort of explanation, that sort of theory—theory leading straight to methods of grappling with the world and altering things, to action and to responsibility. We think and we explain in a world which we are making, and which we are giving its rationality, its purpose and whatever goodness human existence comes to possess.

> Philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it.

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Discussion contributions on:

Stages of Social Development

Sid Douglas

THERE are no real facts in Comrade Robin Jardine's article on "Stages of Social Development" (July *Marxism Today*) to back up his fanciful speculations on China and India, in which he suggests that Slavery as an economic mode of production was peculiar to the Mediterranean—alone in the world.

Robin Jardine refers to the general Marxist theory of five stages of human society, and implies that there is a flaw in this theory, because he says Marx himself only designated four modes of production in "the progress of the economic formation of society"—in which Marx says "we can designate the Asiatic, the ancient, the feudal and the modern bourgeois modes of production as so many epochs. . . ." There is no flaw or contradiction between the theory of five stages, and Marx's "four formations".

The five stages of the Marxian theory are not modes of production, but are general ethnological social stages. The five general ethnological stages are:

1. Savagery } Marx's "Asiatic" form
2. Barbarism }
3. Slavery .. Marx's "Ancient" form
4. Feudalism
5. Capitalism

Marx refers to both Savagery and Barbarism as "Asiatic" for these early forms persisted in the vast mass of Asia long after Slavery—or Marx's "Ancient" form—was established in the Mediterranean. Marx refers to slave society as "the Ancient" because it was the earliest form of Civilisation.

Since, under both Savagery and Barbarism, the mode of production was communal, he designated both these epochs as having one mode of production. Thus it comes about that while five stages of human social development can be perceived, only four modes of production have arisen. There is, therefore, no flaw or contradiction between what Marx said in the preface to the *Critique of Political Economy* and the Marxist five-stage theory of *social* development.

Slavery in the Mediterranean World

Robin Jardine finds difficulty in applying the five-stage theory to mankind as a whole because he is doubtful that slavery in China and India ever existed as completely as in the Greco-Roman world, and he presents us with a clue to his difficulty by saying ". . . is there any evidence to show that agriculture, the basis of the whole, was carried on mainly by slaves?" During the existence of slavery as the dominant mode of production in the Mediterranean world, at no time were the slaves *alone* the sole source—or even the overwhelming source—of labour power, *particularly* in cultivation. The plebeian class, who derived their privileges and status from gentile descent in the change from Barbarism to Slave economy, were free peasants, and worked alongside the slaves in all slave societies. While the plebeian class also laboured in the fields, it was, nevertheless, the labour of the slaves which established the mode of production. The plebeians provided the soldiery and civil servants in the main, and the lands they held were fiefs only, which were allocated to them on a temporary basis as payment for military service, and on which they were compelled to work to obtain sustenance when not at war, and not wealth for the purpose of exchange and barter as the patriarchal owners of the slaves could. The southern states of the U.S.A. before the Civil War embraced a population of 18 million, of which only 3 million were slaves. Would Robin Jardine thus claim that these southern states were not based upon a predominant slave economy? There is, therefore, no substance whatever in the supposition that, because the *majority* of agricultural workers were not slaves, the predominant mode of production was not that of Slavery.

In Robin Jardine's view, Roman slave economy broke down through sheer inefficiency as an economic system. Yet, this economic system had lasted a thousand years, and was more productively efficient at its end than at its beginning. To say, therefore, that the Roman Empire broke down *principally* because of the "sheer inefficiency of the slave system" is to simplify and exaggerate the facts. Capitalist society is breaking down. Is this merely due to the inefficiency of capitalist industry, or is it because the social relationships act as fetters upon social production? As Marxists we claim the latter, and the inefficiency of capitalist industry is a corollary of this, and not *vice versa*. Exactly the same theory applies to the

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breakdown of the Roman mode of production based on slavery.

As under declining capitalism, there was a great monopolisation of the means of production in the last phase of the Roman Empire, and with it a great polarisation of wealth. Large-scale estates were expanded and worked by slaves against whose labour the plebeians could not compete. The Roman armies were no longer composed of the plebeian fief holders of old, but were paid mercenaries. Thus the plebeian class were more and more divorced from the land. Under these conditions the mass of Roman citizenry throughout the Empire were rendered impoverished and hopeless, and thus no longer supported the system, resorting to crime, revolts, and banditry.

The Roman Empire did not *just* "fragment back in to a number of small agricultural communities"—whatever this may mean. Jardine ignores the enormous part played by the Northern "Asiatic" Barbarians who overran the Empire many times from top to bottom, in successive waves, disturbing the existing economy in each area by integrating slave forms of economy with tribal forms to produce a variety of feudal structures in which Christianity as a social force played a dominant role.

Naturally, to a viewer of these events separated from their occurrence by tens of centuries, the appearance would seem "fragmented" because the changes occurred in each area differently and unevenly to suit the interests of the Barbarian invaders, but the change in each case could not possibly develop in any other but a feudal direction. In those areas where the change came late, slavery persisted in one form or another as the economic basis, until the change *did* take place.

Slavery in China

Lewis Henry Morgan in his *Ancient Society,* on which Engels based his work *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and The State,* shows that the Chinese moved to the gentile system of Gens in which the Punaluan Family gave way to the Temporary Pairing Family, or what Lewis terms The Syndyasmian Family. Hence the Chinese in fact must have reached and lived a life corresponding to the upper stage of Barbarism, which is the stage just prior to Slavery. It is inconceivable that the Chinese having reached the Syndyasmian Family and last stages of primitive communism then jumped a complete ethnological stage (slavery) and moved directly to a feudal form of economy.

There is evidence that slavery was known well enough in China, and strangely enough up to a very recent date, in large areas. Alan Winnington wrote a book in 1959 called *The Slaves of the Cool Mountains* wherein he describes his experiences in the Slave states of China in great detail. These areas were the Liangshan (Nursu), Jinhaw and the Wa of Haimeng in and around the Yunnan Province. In these areas he found fully developed slave economies. While Alan Winnington's discoveries do not prove the existence of slavery in China's ancient past, they do prove that slave economy almost inevitably occurs where a community has a low level of development in the forces and means of production, which, however, is in advance of Barbarian levels, and where such a community is isolated from more advanced economies.

Jardine refers to Professor Goodrich's studies on China, in which he incredibly claims that he could only find evidence of no more than 1 per cent of slaves in all that vast mass of land and humanity. Alan Winnington's discoveries seem to discount Professor Goodrich's claim, but even more significant is the fact that William the Conqueror records in his Domesday Book about A.D. 1086, that at that late date, after some centuries of feudalism, some 9 per cent of the population of Britain (25,000 people) still existed as slaves! (See A. L. Morton's *People's History of England*). It would be interesting to discover how the Great Wall of China and similar tremendous projects were executed, if not by slave labour.

Robin Jardine does not deny that China had a feudal economy, and presumably he will not deny that China must have nourished primitive communism in distant days. How, then, did China's feudalism arise? Primitive communism cannot accumulate wealth, even when it is affluent, to make a change to feudalism practicable. Where labour becomes more productive, the excess of wealth created can only be accumulated by a change to class society, and in historical conditions this can only be a slave society, for this change from communal forms of ownership can only take place simultaneously with changes in family relationship, and hence in the inheritance of property. This conception has not been disturbed by any new facts, and is both Marxist and comprehensible, whereas Jardine's speculations neither satisfy Marxist theory nor the knowledge we have, and lack even plausibility.

Irrigation Works

Speaking of the Indian and Chinese river valley systems and irrigation works, Robin Jardine says that these were so well constructed that they did not break down "as occurred in Mesopotamia".

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"Thus," he says, "there was no urge to change the economic basis" as by inference there was in Mesopotamia. Jardine's reasoning is contradictory. The economic basis of society most often changes when the forces and means of production are developed to their *highest* level and not their lowest. Thus it should have been in China and India where the "urge" to change the economic basis should have operated most strongly and not in Mesopotamia, if Jardine's speculations are correct. However, peoples do not change the economic basis of society merely because of an "urge" to do so. These changes are called into being by the people through the inadequacies of existing social relationships which place fetters upon the existing mode of production. It is true that the Indians and Chinese had very extensive river valley systems, but how did they raise the accumulated capital necessary to construct their extensive irrigation works *in the first place*? This could never be done under primitive communism where wealth was shared in common, thus effectively preventing its accumulation.

The irrigation works of the river systems of the Mediterranean world were built under a predominating slave economy, and there can be little doubt that this must have been the case also in both India and China. Jardine speaks of the enormous number of villages which grew up along the Indian and Chinese valleys which "supported a central government having a very complex and elaborate structure". This could never have been a Barbarian "government", since this is a contradiction in terms, as a barbarian society was not constituted to support a government of such a character. In the historical conditions such a government could have been no other than that of a slave society. If Jardine cannot accept this, I would ask him to state clearly what he conceives the economic basis actually was, for nobody else has yet found or conceived of an economic mode of production other than those of the four formations referred to by Marx, that is: communal, slave, feudal and capitalist; and in every ethnological era either one or the other must predominate in a given area, and must come into being either from maturation from a previous era, or be imposed by outside forces.

Robin Jardine says that a well documented Indian history would probably show that slavery was never a predominant form in India. I take leave to believe precisely the opposite. Gordon Childe, the famous archaeologist, in his work *The Most Ancient East,* refers to the ancient Harrapa civilisation which established itself throughout the Indus Basin in the third Millennium B.C. as one which was similar to the Egyptians and Babylonians. On page 173 he says: "As in Egypt and Babylon, the conditions of life on an alluvial plain involved organised co-operative effort to control and direct the flood waters that made life possible and importations on a large scale to make it pleasant". He goes on: "Only three ruined cities have so far been explored . . . but they are already 400 miles apart. Yet the civilisations of all three are astonishingly homogeneous". Childe, on the same page, then asks the question: "What was the political counterpart of this cultural unity?" and favours the view that this counterpart was based upon differences in wealth "amounting to class divisions" which, in his view, were similar to those which had existed in the Old Egyptian Kingdom and Babylon—i.e. slave economy.

The fact that humanity did not develop evenly, and that some peoples were in different ethnological stages, and that similar stages were endowed with a superficial difference in appearance in different areas, in no way invalidates the Marxist conception of the mainsprings and impetus of change in human societies. Robin Jardine will need to produce much stronger evidence than that of speculation to overturn the present Marxist concept of the four predominant economic modes of production, and the five human stages of social development, which occurred during the three great epochs of Savagery, Barbarism and Civilisation.

D. A. Griffiths

COMRADE TAIT mentions that slavery was both preceded and succeeded by feudalism, and also mentions the fact that there was no serious conflict between the rising feudal class and the slave-owners on occasions where feudalism superseded slavery. If we are to make sense out of this we must conclude that feudalism arose out of the break-up of primitive communal society. We must also conclude that feudalism nowhere arose out of slavery, in the same way as capitalism arose out of feudalism. Capitalism was produced by the development of class antagonisms within feudalism, and as a result of the very progress of feudal self-development. However, the feudal ruling class did not arise within the ranks of slave society in opposition to the slave-owning ruling class, but was a partner to that ruling class, and was at times formed of slave-owners—hence, no "serious conflict" but rather a "peaceful transition".

Put more graphically, capitalism is the creature

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—even if not "the voluntary begotten pet child" (Engels)—of feudalism, whilst slavery and feudalism were bedfellows. The "necessity" which made such "strange bedfellows" was that of urban development and trade. But urban development and trade in peculiar circumstances. I would suggest that, by and large, slavery arose out of urbanisation of what, from the trade point of view, were the most important late primitive communal and early feudal societies. That is, in societies where the division of labour necessary to accommodate this urbanisation arose not out of the degree of development of agricultural technology—as was the case in England when she became slowly urbanised towards the end of the middle ages—but as a result of the high degree of development of external trade. In relation to trade, Greece and Rome lived on the "quasi-rents" of almost hothouse conditions.

In other words, commodity production did not become significant in the major slave societies as a result of the increasing division of labour within the manor, as it did in England, but as a result of conditions external to the basic feudal or, even, late primitive communal society. With neither much constant capital as means of production, or much crystallised labour as means of subsistence to supply to his worker, and with a high "necessary labour time", it was inevitable that the "entrepreneur" in Greece and Rome should employ his labour under slave conditions.

Slave Labour in Agriculture

The above explanation allows for Comrade Browning's point that agriculture has not been carried on by slave labour to any considerable degree. Where there is evidence of agriculture on the basis of slave labour, it is a mere subsidiary, never the basis of a complete economy, and, probably, to be explained in terms of the use of war captives by the primitive Gentes and early feudal societies—war captives adopted into the Gens or killed and eaten in the period when primitive communal societies could not derive surplus value from their captives. Whilst slavery plays no part or at most a small part in the agriculture of societies which advance as a result of the development of productive technology within their own ranks, such a state of affairs is not that of Greece and Rome. In Greece and Rome slavery did play a significant role in agriculture.

In Greece and Rome, due to the circumstances of foreign trade, the expropriation of the peasantry took place long before there was an industrial basis for the employment of the "freed" proletarians. Hence, slavery in Greece and Rome, though the basis of society, was a source of instability. A. L. Morton in his *People's History of England* alludes to the instability of the slave-based society in Rome. Morton shows how in the Roman slave economy, where a rapid development of Merchants' and Usurers' capital took place without an adequate industrial basis, there came into being an unemployable parasitical proletariat which could only be fed by a continuous expansion and plunder of the empire. Thus, the key to the issue appears to be the development of merchant capital to a high degree, but with no parallel development of industry and industrial capital. Slavery apears (in accordance with my "trade hypothesis") to be the result of a premature and finally abortive attempt at "primitive accumulation" and its immediate consequences.

According to this trade, or urban, explanation of slavery, feudalism is the natural successor to primitive communal society. Transition periods of peasant proprietorship occasionally intervene between primitive communalism and feudalism, but in England there was no such intervention, the final transition to feudalism taking place with the move from the primary to the secondary soils and the development of heavy ploughs in the seventh century. The feudal lords, at first, were not so much defence agencies which free peasants forfeited their freedom to, but successors to the landed aristocracy which had developed in the declining Gentes. The view that the feudal lords were above all significant as defence agencies, is popularised by the bourgeois historians in order to "discredit" the feudalists. However, in so discrediting the feudalists they are only pouring calumny on the father of capitalism—notice how it is a bourgeois crime the feudalists are accused of! Protection racketeering!

It is noteworthy that the landed aristocracy which grew up in the declining Gentes was, in Greece and Rome, in an admirable political position to convert itself into a body of slave owners.

Trade Basis of Slavery

Engels supplies much evidence in favour of my general view. In *Anti-Duhring* he points out the "hothouse conditions" enjoyed by Greece and Rome and emphasises the trade basis of slavery. In his *Peasant War in Germany* Engels shows how in much of what is now Germany and France primitive communalism was immediately superseded by feudalism. In his *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* Engels shows how, when Roman slavery declined, it was followed by a late form of primitive communalism in most of the European parts of the Empire, and that it

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was therefore out of primitive communalism that much of European feudalism developed.

All in all, Marx's and Engels's works show how slavery was the consequence of a peculiarly rapid development of commodity production in the period of the decline of the Gentes. The rapidity of the development was based necessarily on external conditions.

Of particular importance especially in relation to Comrade Jardine's article are the works—largely journalistic—of Marx and Engels, on the social systems of the Orient. Marx's "British Rule in India" and his "Notes on Indian History" speak of India as having had no history, merely a gradual approximation to feudalism as the Gentes and Tribes declined. It was the view of Marx and Engels that due to the need for a positive social contribution to agriculture on the part of the landed aristocracy (which developed in the declining Gentes) in India and China—above all irrigation, on which see "British Rule in India" and Engels' letters to Marx immediately before the composition of "British Rule"—private property in land even of the type of late European feudalism was an economic impossibility. With regard to the history of India and China it is important for us in 1961 to bear in mind the consequences of economic initiative in these areas which comes from outside—especially capital investment in the late nineteenth and throughout the twentieth century.

Finally I think it is important to remember that the view of social development "as a whole" which Marx outlines in 1859, was not the one he held in later life. Engels wrote much of his *Origin of the Family* on the basis of Marx's notebooks, and in the course of it Engels outlines social revolutions of great import taking place within primitive (and pre-slave) society. For instance, the replacement of mother-right by father-right (an economic revolution in substance). There is no excuse for ignoring the later views of Marx and Engels on primitive societies, for Plekhanov was expanding these views in Russia in the nineteenth century. I do not wish to give the impression that Marx had a change of heart after 1859, for the fact is that in 1859 he was merely concerned to formulate his materialist conception of history which he had derived from the study of the development of feudalism into capitalism and had merely, so to speak, checked it against what he knew of oriental and ancient history. The only point on which Marx and Engels can be faulted is their over-narrow use of the term feudalism, and too-broad use of the term slavery. Possibly this was what Comrade Browning meant by his point about seeing slaves through the eyes of Roman lawyers.

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